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ABSTRACT

Written in 1917, this book relates the author's experience as a beginning teacher in rural Kansas. The purpose of the book was to provide preservice teachers an overview of educational practices in rural schools at that time. In addition, educational policies are proposed that specifically aim to improve rural schools. The author was barely 20 years old with no teaching experience when he was assigned to a rural school in Kansas. Upon inspection of the school, he was surprised to find there were no crayons, erasers, maps, or other supplies. He soon realized that the community had high expectations for him both as a teacher and as a member of the community. The school was an integral part of the rural community and served as the social center, with such activities as religious worship, singing schools, literary societies, spelling schools, and occasional parties. The author discusses the loneliness he experienced, and the relationships he had with students, with the school board, with parents, and with the community. He relates his own experiences in disciplining students, teaching various subjects, and learning to respect and value the rural way of life. Several chapters describe teaching methods for basic subject areas and also offer strategies for integrating music, stories, and plays into the curriculum. Several concluding suggestions are offered for improving rural schools, one of which involves school consolidation. It is proposed that rural schools could only meet higher expectations and objectives by having larger school units and recruiting better prepared teachers. Additionally, consolidated schools could offer more comprehensive courses of study, thus preparing students to work in the business community. (LP)

375.

"... Of course, the grounds were in the bend of the creek—that is what bends in the creeks are for. It is in these bends that the trees grow the largest and that the grass grows the greenest and it is just beyond these bends that are the riffles, and it is in these riffles that the barefoot children love most to be, where mothers and grandmothers cast longing glances and wish they were children just for a day."

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THE RURAL SCHOOL FROM WITHIN

BY

MARION G. KIRKPATRICK, B.S., PH.D.

SPECIALIST IN EDUCATION, DIVISION OF COLLEGE EXTENSION, KANSAS STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

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DEDICATED TO

THEODORE F. RHODES

WHO LOVES HIS FELLOWMEN AND WOULD RATHER HEAR HIS NEIGHBORS' CHILDREN "SPEAK" AND SING THAN TO HEAR A PATRICK HENRY OR A LILLIAN NORDICA; WHO WOULD RATHER SEE A BALL GAME BETWEEN HOME BOYS THAN ONE BETWEEN ALL-STAR TEAMS; WHO KNOWS THE JOY OF BEING A NEIGHBOR; WHO BELIEVES THAT CREDULITY IS NOT ALWAYS A VIRTUE; WHO THINKS THAT CASH REGISTERS AND COMBINATION LOCKS ARE NOT REFLECTIONS UPON INTEGRITY, AND THAT CAREFUL AUDITING AND ACCOUNTING MAKE FOR HONEST SERVICE; WHO BELIEVES THAT MEN OFTEN BECOME CRIMINAL BY FORCE OF CIRCUMSTANCES, AND THAT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS WHEN PROPERLY CONDUCTED ARE THE SAFEGUARDS TO GOOD CITIZENSHIP

PREFACE

In no line of work has there been so much aimless effort for improvement as in the rural schools. It would be unkind and untrue to say that this effort has not always been made by intelligent men and women, but it would not be at variance with truth to say that many who have written in behalf of the rural schools have been those who had little first hand experience with the subject which they set out to improve.

With the belief that a rural school education and nearly a quarter of a century spent in teaching in and adjacent to the rural schools may be a partial preparation for so great an undertaking as rural school improvement, the author offers this work, "The Rural School from Within."

Several of the chapters are devoted to actual experiences which are believed to be typical. If the recital of these experiences indicates a love for boys and girls, a knowledge of rural home life—of the deep love of parents for their children, and of the great sacrifices that parents in rural communities are making for their children; this love and knowledge were acquired by many years of close acquaintance with

a people among whom, and for whom, the writer has chosen to spend his life.

This contribution is made with a hope that it may become a factor in determining the aim of rural schools, in obtaining a recognition from colleges and other higher institutions of learning that education must be universal with respect to interests represented in the course of study as well as universal so far as individuals are concerned.

Before entering upon the construction of a policy for the rural school, the writer gives as faithfully as possible his experiences as a teacher of a Kansas rural school. These experiences were interesting, and dealt with live problems, and throughout their discussion it is hoped that the student of pedagogy will recognize the employment of sound and progressive educative principles and the revealing and elucidating of deep-lying fundamentals of discipline and management, which are knotty problems for thinkers and experts in education, by such concrete illustrations as to be of vital worth to the teacher just entering the profession, and helpful to those who have been long in the work.

This book is a story—a story that repeats the experiences of thousands of teachers, tens of thousands of American parents, and of innumerable children. It is a story plainly but not bluntly told; it is uncolored by things that might have happened.

The mistakes of the teacher himself are given for the purpose of encouragement to the discouraged teacher, and as a danger signal to teachers, parents and school boards. They are given to give publicity to the inefficiency of the untrained teacher and to bring plainly to the public mind the importance of suitable schools for all the people.

For kindly criticism offered and interest manifested in this effort to render a service to the rural schools, the author in appreciation thereof acknowledges the following:

President Henry Jackson Waters, Dean Edward C. Johnson, Professors M. G. Burton, Edwin L. Holton, J. W. Searson, Geo. E. Bray, Wm. H. Andrews, H. L. Kent, Otis E. Hall, H. W. Davis, N. A. Crawford, and W. T. Stratton, of the Kansas State Agricultural College, and Mrs. W. T. Stratton and Miss Elsie Pauley, Manhattan, Kansas.

April, 1917. M. G. KIRKPATRICK.

INTRODUCTION

THE improvement and betterment of American rural life is one of the large national problems which has grown out of the abandonment of hand farming for machine farming, and the change from home industry to highly specialized commercial processes.

In the solution of the rural problem, new ideas and new ideals will be required. This solution will not consist in copying city methods. It must be a growth, a development, and fruition of the best that is in the country. The principal forces to be utilized must be country forces. Rural betterment is not something which may be handed down from above. It must come up out of the ranks of the country people. The one agency which touches the life of all the country people is the rural school. But this school has not kept pace with modern progress. It has not adjusted itself to changed coditions. It is not rendering its fullest service. The course of study must be changed to help solve the farmers' economic problems, to point the way to a new era of health and sanitation in country communities, to place before boys and girls new ideals of citizenship. The rural school must have a more definitely recognized

and recognizable purpose, a more direct connective with life problems and activities.

The social problems of the country are large, and here, too, the rural school must do its part. We shall always have a country-minded people living in the country. Any agency which does not recognize this fact must fail to get results in the country. In the country school must be sympathetic understanding and foresight; a knowledge of boys and girls, and of men and women and the forces which move them and lead to success or failure. Inside this school there is the reflection of the spirit and life of the community. The shortcomings of parents, the petty jealousies and sympathetic friendships of the small community, the impulsiveness of adolescence, the foolishness of youth, the rowdyism so difficult of control, the extremes of rural independence, the capacity for doing things, the willingness to respond to wise leadership—all these are a part of the school and must be reckoned with for good or for evil.

The teacher must make all these over, right the wrong, improve the bad, stimulate and use the good. The course of study, the schoolhouse and equipment, the machinery of administration, the teacher's training and personality are but the means by which this development is to be directed. But above all the spiritual and moral forces, the men and women, the boys and girls of the community must be under-

stood and used. These constitute the problem. They alone offer promise for the future. We would not replace them if we could. We must help them to grow and to use their talents.

Few persons who write about rural schools understand and love rural life. Few teachers know men and women, boys and girls. Few have the good sense and the ability to lead and to direct quietly. Few are attuned to the countryman's point of view. Few are patient with his conservatism. Rowdyism in the country is much talked about, but is too often condemned and not often enough redirected. Meanness in the people of the country is given much publicity, but the lives of far too many Father and Mother Roses remain unhonored and unsung. The penuriousness of country school boards is proverbial, but the stout-hearted, sensible, capable and progressive William Constads find their way into too little of the literature for teachers.

Those who really wish to love and serve and direct country people, who have a vision of managing and forming, not of controlling and bossing, who have faith in the service the country school can render to rural life will get a sane and helpful philosophy in this look at The Rural School from Within.

HENRY JACKSON WATERS,
President, Kansas State Agricultural College.

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THE RURAL SCHOOL FROM WITHIN

CHAPTER I

Living Up to Reputation

I find it impossible to read the "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" without my mind's going back twenty-five years to a sheltered nook known as Constad's Crossing on one of the important tributaries of the Kaw. In this neighborhood, fifteen miles from a town, I taught my first school. The schoolhouse was located on the banks of the heavily wooded stream, and established the center of a circular valley which was bounded on the north, west, and south by high hills, opening at the north and south for the inflowing and outflowing of Big Indian Creek.

My qualifications were none too good, and as the school enrolled from sixty to seventy-five pupils, and as I was barely twenty years old, it was a matter of some surprise at first that I had been given the position. It dawned on me after it was too late to withdraw that I had landed a job that no one else wanted; that I had been the only applicant, notwithstanding the fact that teachers were plentiful. I later dis-

covered, or heard, that our good county superintendent (over whose bones the mossy marble has been standing for many years) had intentionally steered me that way with the fond hope that he might give me "mine." This he did in payment for the dog's life he had endured a few years previous when he was trying to save for the good of America an aggregation of Brom Boneses and Bud Meanses, whom as he often said, he would have gathered under his wings as a hen would her chickens—but they would not. Yes, when too late, I found all this out.

A half mile from the school was my boarding place. How vividly do I remember the Saturday afternoon before the "First Monday in September" when I went to the home of Father and Mother Rose to board! The hills were then throwing their shadows over and far beyond the house, the hollyhocks were all abloom, and everything was quiet. Neither of the old people rose to greet me, but from their rockers in the vine-clad porch they smiled and bade me a welcome that meant more than have all the attentions of the uniformed attendants who infest the modern hostelries and rush for my baggage. I inquired for a drink, and was informed that unless the spring had quit, I would have no difficulty in quenching my thirst. It was no journey down a hill to the spring. Just beyond the kitchen door stood the springhouse. And such a spring! The

volume of water was such that enough power might have been generated from it to do all the grinding, churning and washing on any farm in Kansas and also furnish drink for thousands of cattle. For weeks this great spring was sweetly singing to me as I dropped off to sleep.

About five o'clock I went to the schoolhouse to see that all was in readiness, and found there two of the neighborhood women "sweeping out." The house did not meet my expectations, but it was satisfying to feel that there were at least two people in that community who were interested in education and who had a community interest. I thought it but proper that I should lend a hand, and was soon busily engaged in scraping and digging at questionable accretions to the floor. Between our working and talking I was informed that the house had not been really cleaned since last quarterly meeting, and as to-morrow was quarterly meeting day, it was thought best to give it a scrubbing. Then I knew the ablutions were not in honor of the new teacher nor of the cause which he was expecting to promote. I learned later, and to my surprise, that all religious denominations had free use of the schoolhouse, and, excepting during vacation, the teacher was janitor *ex-officio*.

I had read in books on teaching of how the new teacher should make a careful survey of the premises,

noting deficiencies, etc., and I was not long in observing that there were neither crayon nor erasers, maps nor globes, shutters nor curtains, and that one of the two dilapidated outhouses had turned turtle. The only provision for winter was a rick of four-foot wood, eight feet high and about a hundred feet long. As I turned my face to the hollyhocks, I started up a little monologue in which I paid my respects to my county superintendent, who, I felt quite sure, had done something to me. Father Rose was yet rocking on the porch. He arose when I entered, saying, "Sup_er is ready."

You who have had the good fortune to sit at such a table, I congratulate. Everything was spotlessly clean. The colors, if not associated with so many fond recollections, might not appeal to me; but even at this late day a feeling of love and goodness sweeps over me whenever I behold blue plates, cups and saucers, green milk pitchers and green salt-cellars. Never in all those nine months was there food on the table that did not meet my most hearty approval, and I fancy myself somewhat of an epicurean. Never do I see blue dishes but I have a vision of an experience that marks my entrance into a life of responsibilities. I sat at this table with these dear, kind people whose every look was one of love and sympathy. The table was loaded with everything I liked, and I at once forgot quarterly meetings and foreboding woodpiles,

and mentally resolved that after a respectful silence I'd do the right thing to that cooking.

In reverential attitude, I bowed my head, waiting for a blessing which I felt was sure to fall from the lips of my venerable host. I have never forgotten that mistake. He pronounced no blessing, but when he spoke, it was simply to say, "Brother, return thanks." Once I was riding on the pilot of a large locomotive and we ran into a dray wagon, and my life was barely saved—once I broke through the ice on the Missouri River and clung to the edge with freezing hands till rescued—upon several occasions I have met death head on; but never yet have I experienced such a shock as the one I received at that evening meal, when the words, "Brother, return thanks," were pronounced. After the shock, I gathered my few scattered wits together, and I recalled fragments of my father's grace. These fragments were ill put together. I knew it. It was entirely superfluous for Mother Rose to cast a pitying glance at her husband or to have that pitying glance returned.

I discovered for the first time that I had assumed certain responsibilities not mentioned in the contract. I discovered that I had at once become a man; that passive membership in a church was no longer to be my religious status; that the written recommendations that I had got from friends, who felt I ought

to have a chance, had given me a reputation that would stretch me to the breaking point to measure up to. I almost wished that that meal might never end, for, if it did, it would mean a repetition of the experience the next time.

After supper I sought the sitting room and the daily paper. Since they received mail but once a week I soon realized that it was unreasonable to expect a daily paper. The only reading matter in sight, however, was a King James' Translation and a Dr. Jayne's Prognostication of weather and promulgation of "eternal-life" remedies. I made inquiry for the weekly papers, and, imagine my surprise, when I was told, "We take no papers. We discovered years ago that papers tend to interfere with one's religious enjoyment." Picture my dilemma. Twenty miles from home, no longer one of the boys, no sweetheart within twenty miles, nor likely to be, nothing to read but the Bible and Dr. Jayne's Almanac, and visions of that county superintendent laughing and telling his wife of my predicament. How the mills of the gods do grind!

Picture me on the following beautiful Sunday morning—I, who had been the problem of problems for teachers and professors—running the gauntlet when I made my way into the schoolhouse for Sunday School, which came before Quarterly Meeting. If your grief is not too great, behold me secretly

praying, fervently too, that I should not be called upon to lead in prayer. That morning for the first time in my life I lost faith in the efficacy of prayer. It was a poor prayer, it was my first in public—but I was living up to a reputation that my friends had given me.

Talk about rural leadership! Those people led me into more grief in twenty-four hours than I ever supposed was in the whole world, and I was twenty years old, and had been to college. I am not of a suspicious nature, nor did I need to be to guess who was the most talked of young man in the Sunday School. I was not sensitive, nor was it necessary that I should be, to feel considerably cut up, to have half the young men whose class I was given to teach, get up and saunter out before I had half finished distorting the Gospel that Paul preached to the Ephesians. Before that quarterly service was over I had so committed myself to a policy of religious activity that retreat would have been ruinous.

Having been brought up according to the strictest of Presbyterian parents, and believing with all my heart that "A Sabbath well spent brings a week of content," I put in the afternoon attending church service, and also the evening. The evening service began at early candle light and lasted a long time.

You read in books of the encounters and experiences of the young teacher. Read this please, believ-

ing. Some hardened old teacher may say what he would have done; but, young teacher, what would you do to-day, if you had to meet such conditions? I had been a very popular young man. I had lots and lots of friends and no enemies, except a few old teachers, and who was caring about them? But out here I was a stranger, entirely unknown to the young people. Can you imagine my utter surprise when that night on my way home, I heard my name ringing out clearly in a song improvised by a bunch of the boys? They sang it long and loud—and I still think, abominably—and the minister who walked home with me laughed at my discomfiture and shame. Can you imagine the feelings that passed through my mind after I had laid me down to sleep, and prayed the Lord my soul to keep? Do you believe me when I say that I hoped I might die before I waked? Do you believe that one can have such experiences without ever thereafter sympathizing with young teachers and wishing that he might make their burdens less heavy and their pathways more smooth?

CHAPTER II

Onward Christian Soldiers

None but the initiated can appreciate what the first day of school in the country means.

The teacher in a city school knows nothing about it. The city teacher goes before her pupils with a course of study outlining in detail the work of the day. She has a list of all the pupils and the characteristics of each. Floors have been thoroughly cleaned; blackboards, erasers, maps and charts have the appearance of never having been used; and the teacher herself, after a vacation in the Rockies, Ozarks, or Catskills, bears a most markedly rejuvenated appearance. She has a ready-made program and when the hour for beginning arrives, she has a janitor to press the button. Thus does her school open, and she experiences a day so uneventful that she congratulates herself with accomplishing so much so soon, failing to recognize the fact that during those summer months when vacation days were on, superintendents and principals were carefully working out the problems which she never sees and probably never knows exist.

To a limited degree, there is no greater opportunity for development than that which knocks the

first day upon the country schoolhouse door where the teacher is teaching her first school. To her is granted unlimited sway. It is a survive or perish proposition—a survival of the fittest, and considering the voyage through eddies and whirlpools, down rapids and over cataracts, yesterday amid baffling calms, to-day in areas of high barometric pressures, and to-morrow in hurricanes and cloudbursts, it is a marvel that so many live till the day when it may be said to them, "Well done, thou good and faithful, accept a position in the village school. You have been faithful over many things, you are now made ruler over few." The invitation is accepted, and she who has dared to glean in the fields of Boaz and he who has toiled in the vineyard are made members of that royal throng who sing, "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," accompanied by a Steinway Grand, or a Victor, in a hall where "licking and learning" part ways, never more to meet till the real life problems are met.

I have never made pretensions to singing ability, but I opened my first school, after reading selections from Proverbs, by singing "Onward Christian Soldiers," while I held by the hand one Miss Kansas Denman, who had persisted in talking while her teacher was reading, "The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright, but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness." Kansas was a diminutive mortal

from a physical standpoint, but a giantess in disobedience.

Miss Kansas was little, but she was old. One reason for mentioning her age second is, that, as a writer, I believe in mentioning facts in their chronological order. I knew she was little before I knew she was old. I did not know she was seventeen till I had taken the census. I did not know till after school that day that she was the sweetheart of the biggest young man on Indian Creek. Of course, her father was a member of my board.

When I was a very small boy I determined to teach school. It was always my intention to teach but one term, and during that one term, I intended to see that the girls enjoyed no special privileges. They would get a square deal but they need not expect any better treatment than was given the boys. I grew up with that resolve, and it was my first experience in discipline to lead Miss Kansas to the front. I had not told her to desist from talking, but I had stopped reading and looked at her. She only looked and went on with her pouring out, so I immediately proceeded to do a little retrieving. And this is how Kansas came to be in hand while her teacher sang "Onward Christian Soldiers, marching as to war." I have read many, many books on discipline. I have read much on moral suasion, and know all about the Law of Natural Consequences,

and that hasty action is unwise; but I have never failed to visit summary punishment if pupils persisted in evil after knowing I was conscious of their misconduct and disapproved of it.

My first day's enrollment was fifty-four. This was in the days prior to text-book uniformity. We had the greatest variety of books that I had seen up to that time. It was greater the next day, and continued to increase until the enrollment was complete, about the middle of December. I am not at all certain that the text-book condition was a really bad one. It did give variety. Some of the readers were new to me, and almost interesting. The arithmetics were good. The grammars were good. The histories were poor, so were the geographies. The first two subjects were my favorite studies. The last two were my poorest ones. I have always noticed that teachers are most likely to condemn texts in subjects about which they know nothing, or which they dislike. I was no exception. We had only two good books in the school, arithmetic and grammar.

As I look back upon my work in that school, I see many, many vital mistakes that I made, my first one being an attempt to teach school. I had made no particular preparation for the work. I had gone into it with the thought of teaching one term, and Methods of Study or the Art of Teaching had not been any definite part of my school work. In

my schoolboy days, how to avoid difficult tasks and harass our natural enemy, the teacher, were our majors. In a way such a problem may be a preparation for teaching. It has this in its favor: the teacher with such an experience always knows about what to expect on the other side of the fence, and he does not need a periscope to see it. To no other person do the straws so accurately denote "From whence comes the wind."

As I looked over that bunch of boys with their pennants flying, my heart went out to them. It was only duty that restrained and kept me from enlisting with the enemy, against any power that existed for the purpose of government. They were my friends, although, in their ignorance, they thought they were enemies. Those girls, I see them to this day! They were not very bad. They never were, but I would that they had been bad! There was that lukewarmness, that disposition to look with approval upon boys' wrongdoings, that is so damaging to discipline and yet leaves nothing sufficiently tangible to implicate the real instigators of most wrongdoing.

I have already stated that I made many mistakes, but I did some things quite well. I had made some preparation for my first day's work. I had a tentative program. I got the names and ages and classified the school without assuming any obligation from the board or predecessor. I even went so far

as to carry a broom from home in order that I might present as good an appearance to the children as the Mothers in Israel had presented, by my assistance, on the preceding day.

Modern educators are agreed that a real teacher must have an aptitude for vicariousness. Without comment, I submit for your consideration: The teacher who has an aptitude for the vicariousness required in case cited is abundantly supplied with aptitude.

I have said twice that I made mistakes. What some of those mistakes were I'll tell in a later chapter. One mistake that I believe I made the first day was in attempting too much. I realized that I had a big job. I knew that there were an even hundred of my old associates who were wondering every minute of that day "how I was making it," and I was determined that I would be aboard ship in case she went to the bottom and that I would never go back home if I failed to handle the job. Maybe that determination was a mistake. In years since, when I have seen teachers, not in rural schools but in town schools, working and giving their very lives for an apparently unsympathetic, unappreciative public, I have wondered if it would not be better viking-like to head the death bark for the open sea, with none aboard to effect her return, or Samson

like, die with the Philistines, rather than to pursue a forlorn hope.

I well remember as a child how impatiently I often waited for four o'clock. It nearly always seemed a long, long time. This four o'clock was longer in coming than any previous one, but it came, and so did five o'clock before the room was in readiness for another day. I have done every kind of work about a farm. I have bound wheat, and stacked it; I have cut corn and husked corn, and scooped it ten feet high into a crib; I have worked in every position around a threshing machine, and have followed a team ten hours a day in grading on public works, but I never was quite so tired as at the close of my first day's school. For $1.87½ and board myself!

Along with my other tastes I am particularly fond of good pictures. Among popular favorites there is one picture that is classed as a masterpiece: End of Day, by Adan, but this picture I absolutely refuse to like. For my readers who do not know this picture, I give this brief description: Man going home from work, carrying hoe and rake on his shoulders. A good companion picture for that one could have been made from me and my broom. I've always been thankful Adan did not see me first.

CHAPTER III

In Loco Parentis

How many times have we heard persons say, "Had I my life to live over again!"

If I had my life to live over again, and expected to be a teacher, I would make a thorough preparation for my work. I am certain I would not knowingly hunt up a rural school and occupy the place intended for a teacher, and draw money from its treasury to educate myself sufficiently to help me land a position in a city school or mayhap, a college. I have been a high school principal and city superintendent, and without hope of favor or fear of condemnation, I make the assertion that the teachers who are doing the most for this country, who work the hardest and get the least remuneration from a money consideration are the rural teachers. No other position in the school system of America requires more skill and efficiency.

There is no teacher that should receive higher pay than a teacher who can take a rural school and ably meet its requirements. Yet the rural teacher is not meeting with the success that her efforts merit. Her efforts are short on securing results for many reasons. Lack of preparation is one of the greatest.

No enterprise suffers for lack of labor, provided the labor requirements are low. There is always a large class of people who must market their wheat without waiting for it to go through the sweat. There is always a class of teachers who would rather sell their services for $40 or $50 per month than to go through the sweat and sell for $200 per month. The rural school always has been the market for this cheap labor. Why men who willingly spend large sums on crop improvement and animal improvement, often paying a fabulous price for a choice brood animal, are so short-sighted as not to see that their children, for whom they are doing so much, need better intellectual advantages, is one of the wonders of our age.

My boyhood home was nine miles from the county seat, and two miles from a town of 400 inhabitants. It would have been better for our community in a moral and social sense if the town had been one hundred and ninety-eight miles farther away. A town of that size is sufficiently large to get enough of the cheap and tinseled to keep out all worthy enterprises. In our boasted age of oratory and music, and art, our village offered nothing except a market and a loafing place for boys. As a social centre, it was destructive to the best interests of its surrounding communities.

A town of that size can be without the

good qualities of a city or of the rural community. It often leads a precarious existence, living entirely upon its wits and the shortcomings of its rural neighbors. Its churches were a little too good to warrant our having our own country church or of going nine miles to the larger and better town. The schools were the same; they were neither rural nor city; they had neither an urban nor a rural interest, and a boy who got his education there was unfitted for the farm and misfitted for the city. This was a wrong condition and one which the small town of to-day is fast solving. The small towns of to-day are recognizing that their interests, social, educational, and economic are rural, and are rapidly adjusting their institutions to meet changing ideals. But it is entirely possible for them to have very different schools from those they now have, and not have better schools. Their social advantages can easily be different without being better. Small towns and rural communities constitute a type that has special interests and for the perpetuation of those interests, their schools, clubs, and churches should exist.

Constad's Crossing, as stated, was fifteen miles from town and was distinctively rural. Its school was a social centre. However, the social activity was limited to religious worship, singing schools, literary society, spelling schools and an occasional party. The first, religious worship, took precedence over

all the others. Every denomination that had the following of one or more families took its turn. Sometimes when each had had its turn, some of the younger enthusiasts, for social reason rather than through religious zeal, would put on a two or three weeks' prayer and song service. Taking it the year through *they* had a very good time. In the winter when the crops were all garnered, society was sure to be somewhat busy.

These, however, were conditions as yet unfamiliar to me. How fortunate is the teacher who, during the hard trials of the day, can look forward to a home-like boarding place where she may go when the day is ended, and find all pleasant and happy, a home with a family which has the respect of the community, a home where all the gossip, silly and malicious, is not carried and promulgated, a home with parents who have led noble lives, and have sent into the world noble sons and daughters. Such a boarding place was mine. True, Father and Mother Rose had begun by laying on me almost insupportable burdens, but so soon, I was beginning to see in their lives the peace and comfort that comes from the forgetting of self and living for others. It was in this home where books were scarce and where efficiency methods in teaching, educative processes, psychology and other fundamentals were unheard of, that I found that the first characteristic

of a teacher is love for his fellowmen. It was here that I was soon to learn the blessedness of giving; it was here I acquired a passionate desire to teach—to do more for the boys and girls committed to my care, but I shall not say more at this time of what this home did for me.

As I approached that home with my dinner basket filled with books and the broom over a shoulder, I began to think of the welcome that would be extended me, of the sympathy and encouragement that would be offered.

Father Rose is sleeping in his big chair, Mother Rose must be in the kitchen. I go on through, put down my basket, thank her for the broom, take up the water pail and bring it full from the spring. Mother Rose looks so sweet when she says, "It makes me feel like Dick was home to have you around."

I was looking forward to an evening at home with my books.

The first day, notwithstanding the fact that I had made some preparation, was far from satisfying to me, and I felt it must have been somewhat disappointing to my pupils. I discovered soon after reaching home, that the evening service was to be attended as a matter of course, and while I felt the need of staying at home, I had not the temerity to make the suggestion.

At the supper table our conversation took a peculiar turn. First, I was asked concerning certain children. Were they at school? Did they have books? How were they dressed? This last question was one upon which I could not give very decided information. In fact, I was not absolutely certain in all cases about the first two. There were those among my pupils about whom I could have told all these things, but I was being asked about the nobodies—the Jones girls and the Longley boys and the Burns children and I did not know whether they were in or not. I thought so. It seemed that I had written their names, but that was as far as I could go. I knew the Marshalls and the Gordons and the Mathews were there, but I did not know for sure about any regarding whom they inquired. I did not merely imagine that Mother Rose was disappointed; it was too evident.

Upon inquiry as to whether any of these families were related to her, she said they were not. She told me that the Jones children,—there were five of them, the oldest, fourteen, and the youngest, five,—had lost their mother a few weeks before, and that their father was very poor and hardly able to work. He had expected to start them all to school. Mother Rose was afraid Rachel, the oldest one, would have a hard time keeping her house work done and keeping her two young brothers and sisters in school.

The Longley boys were from a new family that had just moved into the neighborhood. They, too, were poor people, and Father Rose had let the father have money to buy books for the boys.

The Burns children were worst of all. They made their home with a good-for-nothing uncle who lived back in the woods in a log cabin. His main asset consisted of hounds, and his principal business was coon hunting, trapping and boozing. They spoke very guardedly about this last fault, saying that it was like the first two, a weakness, and they doubted if he could help it. They hoped he would attend the meetings that were to be started in a few weeks by a noted evangelist and said he would be a good citizen if he could be made over and would kill his hounds and quit drinking.

This meeting to-night was not a regular service?

No, it was hardly a regular service. It was a preparatory service, preparing for the revival which they would soon start.

Our supper was over, and I had not been asked how I liked my school, nor how many pupils I had enrolled, nor how I had succeeded without a previous report in organizing the school. I had just been asked about the Joneses, Longleys and Burnses.

In a former chapter was mentioned an aptitude for vicariousness as being one of the characteristics which every teacher should possess. This same

authority, George Herbert Palmer, gives as a second characteristic, "A willingness to be forgotten." With becoming modesty I add as a third "A willingness to be unnoticed," for truly, he that shall find his life, first must lose it.

As I walked to church that evening my thoughts had taken a peculiar turn. Three hours before, as I came home from school they were centred wholly and absolutely upon one thing, and I believe I am using the word in moderation, "Myself." The thoughts were not most worthy ones. They were not upon how well or how poorly I had done my work, not what an abundance of room I had for improvement, but were thoughts of commiseration, and whether or not I had made a favorable impression.

Now, I was thinking of those poor children—the Joneses, Longleys and Burnses, and wondering if I might be able to help them. I had shied away from one white-haired, hatchet-faced, dirty little boy, who tried to stand too close to me. He had put his little hand on my arm, and I remembered now that I had laid it off. As I thought about it, it seemed to me his name was Jones. Then the words of Mother Rose came hovering about me, "lost their mother a few weeks before, father poor and hardly able to work, five of them and the youngest only five years old." This little white-

haired boy was but little more than five years old. He was not a Marshall, nor a Gordon nor a Mathews. The Marshalls and Gordons were all bright looking, clean and well dressed.

In the brief course in pedagogy, I had mastered the words "in loco parentis." My knowledge of that phrase had led me to believe that the teacher has exactly the same authority over the child as the parent; that in applying the law to a case of corporal punishment, the status of the teacher is the same as that of the parent; and that he is amenable to the law for cruel and unusual punishment just as much, but no more, than the parent. Now the words "in loco parentis" came to me, but they came in a new dress and with an entirely different significance. Here were as many as ten children from poor homes, who had probably been in my school that day. They had come long distances; they had made their preparation at much sacrifice. In one case the father had borrowed money to buy books and had gone fifteen miles for them. They had come, some of them, to a school for the first time, and others were strangers in this particular school. What attention had they received from me? Had I given them a kind word, a pleasant look, or a friendly pat? Had I given that whole school individually or collectively anything that meant anything to them or ever would?

As I reached the schoolhouse I saw that the

people were gathering. In fact, the hitch racks that ran the full length of the two sides of the school yard were crowded with teams, hitched to all sorts of conveyances; buggies with tops, carryalls and wagons with spring seats, and wagons with seat boards. This, remember, was twenty-five years ago. There were no automobiles in that aggregation. Could you find such an array of vehicles at any gathering in the Middle West to-day? I leave that question to you, my reader. Attention! so fast does time fly, that we must once in awhile pause and think, and then we must stand aghast. In 1901, in a thriving town in the Middle West, I was superintendent of the schools. My wife, who was always interested in children, sent me a message asking if I would please dismiss the schools and let the children go down town, that there was an automobile down there. It is needless to say that her wishes were granted, and not only did the children go down to see the automobile, but the teachers all went, and the superintendent went along, and it may not be aside the point to say that he met his wife there and she had her little boy there, and her neighbors were there and they had their little boys and little girls there, also, to see the automobile.

Did you notice that I said my wife sent me a message. I did not say that she "called me up." No, there was not a 'phone in the town. She sent

the message. Let me tell you something about that town. The school census is little, if any, more to-day than in 1901, but it has a new high school building costing over $30,000. It has finely equipped laboratories. It has as good a heating, ventilating equipment as there is in America. It has doubled, aye, trebled its high school teaching force.

What about Constad's Crossing? Well, there are no wagons with the high backed spring seats, nor with seat boards either. There are a few back numbers who ride in carryalls and top buggies, but mostly the conveyances are automobiles. Indian Creek is still flowing south. The schoolhouse is still there. The wood pile is just as natural as though it had never been burned. The school is not much better graded. They have but one teacher, but sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Before I went into this byway, running off after carnal things, I was on my way to church. I was having misgivings as to my shortcomings, and instead of turning in, I walked on past, and as I followed the road that led off into the woods, I could hear them singing " Down at the Cross where I first saw the light, Glory to His Name." This, at this particular time, had no message to me. I had a job which bid fair to become my cross, and the more I saw of that job, the more I felt my inability, my unworthiness. Here was a neighborhood of good

people. There were three distinct lines of activity —agriculture, church and school. It was a rich farming community. People were generally prosperous. It was from a moral point of view equal to the place where I had lived. Religiously, it was different from that to which I was accustomed. I did not approve of all that they did, and they far from approved of my method of religious attack.

I finally came to a bridge crossing our already familiar stream, and there I seriously planned my work for the morrow. My planning involved no improvements on discipline. Order in methods of work is mine by inheritance. I want pupils to do right, and when they do not, we just stop and tighten up and start again. I learned early in my farm life that a stitch in time is always advisable. I planned my work so that every pupil would be sure to get some attention every day. Even though it were but a question, a word, some form of recognition would be accorded the poorest as well as the richest, the slowest as well as the quickest. I would, at the very earliest moment, find out the children who most needed my care and I would be "in loco parentis" in so far as I was able. I walked home that night believing I was equal to the emergency. I resolved that the school should no longer hold third place in that community, if I could prevent it, and that if it did hold but third place it would be worthy of it.

CHAPTER IV

Bossing One's Employer

Much has been written by educators on the importance of a good beginning, doing well the work of the first day. It is well to do the first day's work well. It is proper and good business to come before your school the first morning with a full knowledge of your work, but the second day is the day of days. The first day the teacher is new and the pupils are slow to make advances toward unruly behavior till they know their ground. Besides, on the first day, the pupils themselves are an unorganized group. By the second day there is a tendency, if ever there is one, to try out the new teacher. This is particularly true in case the teacher is a beginner without reputation.

Oh, the enthusiasm of youth! Could I go through that experience again! To youth all things are possible. Youth is fearless, vigorous, precipitate. It is in youth that we would control not only those who would direct us but the laws of the universe as well.

On the second morning I was at school at eight o'clock, and from that day to my last work in the public schools, I have missed that time for arriving at my post of duty but by a very few minutes.

The house that I had left thoroughly swept the evening before was in a worse condition than it was before I had swept it. The floor was strewn with bits of paper, whittlings and tobacco. The song I had heard the night before had come rushing into my mind—"Down at the Cross, where I first found the light, Glory to His name!" To what was this condition due? Why would a people who were apparently good, earnest, Christian people, permit the building to which their children were to go for the greater part of the year, to be treated in such a way as to make it so insanitary? Why this condition? Was it the fault of my predecessors? Had they suffered these conditions to exist? If so, why? Had they borne it all patiently, hoping to curry favor, or had they tried to improve conditions and failed? Three teachers last year! Well, if they had hoped to curry favor by enduring such indignities, they had hoped in vain, for the popular verdict was, "They failed."

I had heard what teachers had done with school boards, and I knew it could be done again, and besides, the law was all on my side. I would go to that board and demand that the schoolroom be put in a sanitary condition, and state that school would not be called till my demands were complied with. I knew my rights and I would stand for them.

To the young teacher I will say the following:

Look with suspicion upon the teacher who tells you how he bosses the school board. He is either a liar or a one-termer, and the probabilities are that he is both. This is no more true of the teacher than of the preacher, the dry goods clerk or the bank clerk. Underlings are found boasting in the street corners and other public places of how they have laid it down to the boss, and of how the boss came beautifully to earth, most graciously begged forgiveness, thanked them for their suggestions, and was pleasant and deferential ever afterwards.

One finds these independent, dictatorial fellows in every walk of life pretending to lead railroad superintendents, college presidents and chancellors dogs' lives, and we are made to wonder why these gentlemen do not indicate their subjection by more distressed and cringing spirits. I repeat it, these men who claim they boss their superiors are liars or one-termers and probably both. I would not use such strong terms in my condemnation of the people if I thought the ends I seek were not justified by the means. The end I seek in this particular case is to convince the young people (all others know from experience or otherwise) of the foolishness of such a course, and its thorough lack of the desired results. The teacher who attempts to run a school without coöperation of the board is too foolish to deserve success. The minister who attempts to

"drive" his church board meets with but one result and that is failure. And the employee who will not work with his superior, be he bank president, college president, or railroad president, will be hunting a job, while the others stay and "live to fight another day." Even Uncle Sam, the dearest of men, expects subordination and faithful service from the lowest paid postmaster to the president, and he is seldom mistaken in his men. Many a young man has lost his position while "contending for his rights." The fact must never be lost sight of that every question may have two sides, and the employee is seldom in a position to see the other side.

Closing the schoolhouse door, I made straight for the home of my nearest board member. As I walked, I thought once more of home, and for the first time, wished that I might have my father to advise me. I then began to assemble some of his advice that I never had made use of, and that was, therefore, as good as new. First, he was always an advocate of moderation, and his favorite proverb was, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." He had homelier sayings and two of them came into my mind as I went to boss my board. "Never try to lift till you can get your feet firmly on the ground." "In one respect, and possibly two or three, men are like hogs; when you drive them, do it without

their knowledge or you won't get far; just drift them."

I arrived at the home of William Constad in a few minutes. He was *the* member of the board. He was the one who had had most to do in employing me. He was a pleasant, quiet man of few words, but was a power in his community. He had three children in school, two daughters and one son. The daughters were eighteen and twenty years of age and the son was fifteen. He laughed and said, "You are sure starting in early."

At first I thought he was speaking of the time of day, but he went on to say, "I was mighty glad to hear how you took care of little Kansas yesterday. You sure did get the right one, and you did it early, too. You know my son Bill goes with Kansas, but it don't make any difference, and it wouldn't make any difference if it did. That girl's cost this district enough to educate a dozen boys and girls clear through college. She's mighty popular with the boys, and a boy never makes a bad move but what that girl's got a smile by way of reward. She encourages everything that's ornery, and she sympathizes with the culprit when he is caught."

After thanking him for his encouraging remarks, and assuring him that it was not my intention to attempt lifting a very big load till I got my feet firmly on the ground, I bade him good morning. He

extended his hand to me and I shook it, but he held my hand instead of shaking it, and he said, "I do hope we can have a good school this year. I'm mighty glad you came over. There's one criticism I feel like making on nearly all the teachers we've ever had. They never come around except when they want their pay or a holiday. I wish you could call on the other members soon, and let's get started in right. These are mighty fine people in this community. They are somewhat longer on church than I am, but that's no failing. We never lock no doors out here, and the poor never suffer if their wants are found out."

Before I got loose my hand his eldest daughter came out on her way to school. She came up and was soon bossing the board in my most approved fashion: She said, "Pa, do you know there is no chalk at the school?" Pa said he hadn't thought chalk in months. "Do you know, Pa, there is no broom?" "No," (Pa had not thought brooms for a long, long time). "How did you get along yesterday without these things?" I explained that I had borrowed for the emergency.

"Well," he explained, "the board lives so far apart that it seldom ever gets together. Do you know we have not had a board meeting since the annual meeting last April? We talked that day about several things that ought to be done. We

hired Graham to put in the wood, but that's as far as we really got."

This was my opportunity to do some drifting. I inquired if it would meet his wishes to have me see the other members and suggest a "get-together," and if he would object to my meeting with them. He drifted fine. He said any date the other two wanted would suit him, and he thought my presence would be acceptable to all.

I taught school the second day in a room not to my liking, but I had grown in my own esteem. I had accepted a bad situation, and had mastered myself sufficiently to make a somewhat favorable impression upon the man whose influence I must have if I wished to do any good for that community. I was in a fair way to have a meeting of the board and for that meeting I had determined to make suitable preparations.

CHAPTER V

Having a Part in the Game

When a boy, I was very fond of Dickens. As a man, I am fond of Dickens. Among educators, Dickens, in my estimation, easily holds first place. He was England's greatest educational reformer. His views were not given to the world under high sounding titles, which are often used to enhance the selling of a book rather than to enlighten the purchasers upon its contents. He never wrote a book entitled "Child Study"; but he taught indirectly, through his novels, millions of people; and he taught more effectively of the rights of children and of the training of children than has any other educator of modern times.

In his several novels, he deals with over twenty schools, each with a definite purpose. He discovered or invented a greater number of probable characters than all other English writers combined. He has a character for *every* man and one must be an expert to avoid seeing himself in the great looking-glasses of literature made and patented by Charles Dickens.

In his Martin Chuzzlewit there is a character, Mark Tapley. It has long been my opinion that the young man who can read Martin Chuzzlewit and can

then emulate Mark Tapley has a reasonable success assured.

Mark Tapley is looking for trouble—trouble so great that he cannot overcome it. He wants the experience. He wants his manhood tested. When he is cheated and defrauded out of a large part of his fortune he is encouraged. That is some trouble, but not great enough to lay him low. That might discourage a weak man, or even an average man, but he claims to be *more* than an average man. The ordinary man gives up to just ordinary troubles, but he is more than an ordinary man, and it requires more than a financial reverse to put him down. He suffers other reverses, becomes sick and almost penniless thousands of miles from home, but Dickens makes him stand a *man* in this world of discouraging troubles. He makes him say after all has been laid on him and it would seem that he would break and be crushed under it all, " I'm a man. I could stand more than this. An ordinary man might get discouraged and give up, but not I. I am more than an ordinary man."

What an encouragement such an example must be to the young man starting in life and meeting with reverses! What a blessing to the world it would be if all men were possessed of such optimism, of such appreciation of their true worth!

The sordid, the melancholy and the morose, who

nurse their troubles and their griefs, and finally, rather than suffer "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, would take arms against a sea of troubles and end them," are not the Mark Tapleys who feel it a privilege and a pleasure to bear "the heartaches and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to," and reply with head thrown back, "I am more than an ordinary man." They are the criminal, the suicide, the maniac, and the world's failures.

In my second day of school, seated in some indefinite place in my schoolroom, was MARK TAPLEY, and he had a habit of speaking right out and saying, "You had better give up. That's ordinary trouble and you are but an ordinary man. Give up. The ordinary teacher can't handle this job. It's too big for him, so you had better quit." Everything I did seemed wrong. The entire pupil attitude was bad. It was antagonistic. By and by Mark Tapley got on my nerves and I threw him off, and I stood among those children with the Dickens inspiration, "I am a man, and I am more than an ordinary man. This job is not too big for me. It is not big enough." When I assumed this attitude I became a man. I succumbed to the mental suggestion, and at once the school fell into the attitude that all groups of individuals fall into when they recognize that the leader has confidence in himself.

I went about my work, earnestly trying to do all that was possible for me to do. I had not learned the art of occasioning mental activity, but in an indefinite, hazy manner, I attempted to get everyone to work. My desk was in the front of the room, but I, myself, was seldom there. I had to be there while hearing the smaller children recite, but I arranged "busy" work for the older pupils for those times. I saw to it that there were studies to be worked on while the primary classes were reciting.

I have read extensively on the making of a program. Authorities seem to be agreed that the hardest subject should be given at a time when the pupil's efficiency is greatest. I did not believe that then, and I am not convinced yet that that is the proper way to arrange a program for a large rural school. My plan was to put the studies that I liked best just before noon, and following recess, in the afternoon.

A study of discipline has shown me that troubles are more likely to arise at those times, and it is then that I wish to be at my best. If those are times when pupils' mental efficiency is low, it is then that their disposition to play is strong and their interest in school work is low. If I had the subjects that I liked best at those times, I could keep up a better interest than I would be able to with studies that I did not like.

Another reason for putting these studies at this time was that it involved having the older pupils in recitation at that time to insure their keeping busy up to the time of dismissal. A reason and I have always considered it a defendable one, was that having the studies I liked best at those times insured an interesting closing for my school. Noon and between four P.M. and nine A.M. are the periods for the forming of public sentiment or opinion. Going on the idea that all's well that ends well, I arranged to have the forenoon and afternoon sessions close well.

In mentioning the importance of good endings, I had another peculiar practice which I adopted and followed for a number of years. I always tried to dress a little better on Friday than other days. I would like to have worn my best clothes every day, but since I could not afford that, I compromised by wearing them on Fridays and made a strong effort to have Friday the best day of the week. Sunday being the day when the neighborhood did its visiting, I reasoned that on that day the school would come in for its share of consideration, therefore, it behooved me to have a good ending for the week. I yet believe these reasons are sound. Public opinion is one thing that must be carefully considered if one would succeed. It must not be thought that I permitted things at certain times of the day or week that I prohibited at other times. If I strove for one

thing more than another it was to keep my discipline even, or level. Unevenness is one of the sure signs of a poor disciplinarian.

The attitude of my school on the second day, as already stated, was one of antagonism. Like the wild birds of Crusoe's Island, "their tameness frightened me." In the first place they were absolutely fearless. They had neither regard nor respect for school authority. Even the small children of the third and fourth grades seemed to feel that it was the proper thing to show me disrespect.

All progressed passably well, although under a strain, till the last recess, when I observed the pupils in little groups talking and casting occasional glances in my direction. I scented trouble. I had been through too much of that kind of work as a pupil not to know that a storm was brewing. When I called school, the pupils passed me at the door, each one stamping as hard as he could.

I said each one passed me stamping as hard as he could. As I remember, only three got past. The third one, Dick Holmes, a young rowdy, who boasted that he had helped to break up every school for three years, was not only arrested in his progress, but was thrown with such force out of the door that he was entirely out of the way of the rest who suddenly assumed an orderly and respectful manner and passed to their seats.

Dick stood at the door in a rage, awaiting my next move. I bade him enter, and when he attempted to go to his own seat, I told him he would occupy a seat further in front. I am not certain how ashamed I am of my feelings, but I never felt better in my life. I secretly hoped he would refuse to obey me so that we might measure forces at once. So intent was I upon taking care of him that I asked him rather mildly and with affected timidness to occupy the seat further to the front. The man who is in earnest is usually understood, and Dick seemed to understand all I was saying. He took the seat.

I called the first class, but before doing so notified them they were about to be called, and that they would be asked to stand. With the word "stand" each one stood. I complimented them upon their ability to obey, and then I quietly asked them to be seated. I went through this procedure with every grade in the school, and then with all the grades together. Then I had all but one pass from the room in an orderly manner and gave them ten minutes recess, after which I called school. They formed in line and each marched quietly to his seat. It was then half-past three, and the seven classes that came after recess had not recited, but each had been taught a lesson. I then began with class one, had it come *orderly* to place, assigned some advance work, and so on with all seven classes. These had all

run the gauntlet by 3:55, and I took the remaining time for arranging the books in the desks and getting ready for an *orderly* dismissal.

Through all of this drill Dick had not been allowed to participate. Nor was he among the boys who passed through the door at four o'clock. I am not an advocate of keeping pupils in at recess nor after school, but, if there is an excuse for such a measure, "to prevent collusion" is the most important one.

To my surprise, a broom had been provided from somewhere, and I took up my janitor duties before giving attention to Dick. I had not been sweeping long till he began to remonstrate against staying in the room while I was sweeping. For a moment my pride almost got the better of my spirit, which I was trying hard to rule, but I thought twice and then I spoke several times and most earnestly. I told Dick that it had not been many years since I had been trying, like himself, to run the school; that I had as good a reputation for doing bright things as he had; that my teachers had generally allowed us boys to ruin the school, and I had resolved to do all in my power to atone for my past conduct by making school a place where well-meaning boys and girls might have a chance to study; that I did not like the janitor work so very well, and I surely did not like the dust. I told him that, on the other hand, I rather

enjoyed having him there to take his share of the punishment.

After I had put the room in as good order as was possible I gave my attention to Dick. At my first words he started to treat me just as a disorderly, bad pupil will attempt to treat a teacher, but would not attempt to treat anyone else. His first sentence caused him to be raised from his seat, and he was given what any teacher must give such a boy who is openly rebellious, when the board is not firm and will not take vigorous action. In this school I knew I would have the board with me in case I did not need them. That is to say, if I succeeded I would have their moral support, but if I needed them they would simply charge me with incompetency and leave me to drown.

The school boards after all have a serious undertaking when they take sides in such matters against their neighbors. Hard feelings are engendered and these feelings have been known to outlive a generation and seriously affect the social welfare of a community. A board is usually very friendly toward a teacher who can manage a school without bringing it into disagreeable controversies. Corporal punishment has its bad features, and it has its good ones. The nagging teacher is never a good disciplinarian. The teacher who is deliberate and whips per previous announcement is usually a very poor disciplinarian.

Dick thoroughly understood me when I told him that on the morrow he might feel at liberty to break down my authority, but that he must remember that I paid cash in full, and that he would need expect no extension of time should he become indebted to me. He understood that punishment would be certain and swift and commensurate with the offense.

Thomas Hood's lines in "I Remember," which run, "I remember how the sun came peeping in at morn, and how he never came a wink too soon," exactly described my frame of mind in those days. Nine o'clock never came too soon, especially if I had any "unfinished business." As stated in the first part of this chapter, I tried to close school with good feeling between teacher and pupils, but to have closed school feeling that some pupil had gained an advantage over me, would have, and sometimes did, mean a restless night. My plan was to balance up every day.

This second day had not closed with as great a pleasure as some teachers might desire, but to me it was a joy. For two days I had been suffering from an awful weight. I had been given a Sunday School class of young men; some of them were now my pupils. They, without cause, except that I was to be the teacher, had offered me an insult that is never offered to any class of people but teachers. The very atmosphere of the school was depressing. The

people were good, but their respect for teachers was negative. To have brought matters to an issue, to have had a part in the game, was indeed a satisfaction.

As I went to my boarding place that evening, I went with a consciousness that I had been making rapid developments under the responsibilities that had come to me by virtue of the position to which I had been elected through the influence of my friends and the machinations of a county superintendent.

A resolution was formed that evening, and it has been my policy ever since, and I have given it to hundreds of teachers who have used it with success—that I would begin to-morrow just where I left off to-day and pursue the same policy with diligence. At the close of the first week my policy was accepted by every boy in the school. There was not the slightest evidence of rebellion among the boys and they were settling down to reasonably good work, and I was getting into their games on a give and take basis. I had no feeling of restraint, nor did I have a desire to censure the pupils while at play. When school was called I felt, and this feeling was in no way assumed, that we were opened up for business, and play was to be temporarily suspended. It was a great temptation at times for me not to call for a few minutes after time in case the game was very exciting, but I never yielded to that temptation.

In books there is danger of giving wrong impressions. In the foregoing recital of my second day in school some may get the idea that I was harsh and cruel.

Once I was jokingly advising three young women who were about to receive their degrees and enter the teaching profession, that they must not forget to punish and punish freely. One asked me if I would advise whipping. I said, "Under the right circumstances, I certainly advise it." "Why," she said, "We went to school to you twelve years and we never knew you to whip a pupil."

"Well," I replied, "I guess you are right about that, but if the proper occasion had arisen there would have been corporal punishment administered without consideration of consequences, and it would have been administered at once. I was only joking about your punishing pupils. I want you to be kind to them, especially the little children, but I must ask you to be at all times absolutely in control of the situation."

Some years ago a lady told me of the hard time she was having with the discipline of her room. After telling me of the very bad boys and girls, she said, "I never allow myself to smile. I put on a scowl in the morning and keep it on till the children have passed out at four o'clock." Can one picture a more desolate place than such a schoolroom?

Would not a child be better off out of school than surrounded by such an influence? The teacher who dares not smile, aye, laugh aloud at times during the day, is certain to have an unfortunate schoolroom condition, and the children under her rule are objects of my sympathy. Quick, decisive action is effective. Careless, easy-going, threatening and never-doing teachers will make an orderly school an unfit place for children.

A teacher who cannot discipline and retain the admiration and love of his pupils is a failure. If a teacher be worthy he should be imitated, but he must have likable qualities,—those which appeal to the young and attract them,—or his influence for their good will be negligible. On the other hand, if he be unworthy but possessed of some admirable qualities, he *will* be imitated. There are many capable teachers, and in some respects, lovable and estimable, whose characters wholly disqualify them as models for the youth. The fact that a teacher is loved and admired is far from proof that he is all right. As certainly as the weight unsupported falls to ground, the child becomes like what he loves and admires.

CHAPTER VI

Managing Girls

There was one feature of my school work that was far from satisfactory, and worse yet, I did not see how it could be improved. I had ten or twelve grown young women in school, and about as many between the ages of thirteen and sixteen. I knew boys, and I knew how to control them and have them for my friends. I have always believed that good square treatment is the only kind that appeals to the normal boy; that he will go just as far as you allow, but that he soon learns his limitations.

At the present time I feel that I know something about girls, but at the end of my first week of teaching I would have jumped at the opportunity of trading off all the girls for an equal number of boys without asking any questions. They appealed to me as not being satisfied with fair treatment. They wanted special privileges and seemed to think that they were entitled, by virtue of their sex, to these special privileges. It was my theory that if a certain act was wrong in a boy it was equally wrong in a girl, that if a girl did wrong she should be just as amenable to discipline as a boy; but on all of these points we seemed to differ. If one girl recited and

was wrong, and it fell to me to make it plain and right, nothing unpleasant resulted, but if girl number two made the correction, number one was likely to be out of commission for from one to three days. Pouting seemed to be their natural response to every effort that was put forth for their improvement, if this effort was not in accordance with their liking. With the boys it was "go and come" as directed, but with the girls it was "go and come" as directed when they felt that way, but when they did not, closed went the lips and down went the eyes, and closed and down they stayed till the offended one forgot her grievance, or some other girl took her place. That was one account that never balanced during the first week. In desperation, the first Saturday, I wrote to a lady some years my senior, who was principal of a good high school, to please write me, and write immediately, how to get along with girls. In one week I got her reply. It was satisfactory. I put it into operation, and with the exception of some very extreme cases her recipe worked. In brief her answer was as follows:

"I never have had much trouble with girls. They are usually all right, and never give much trouble. It's the boys, they are the problems. I'll tell you how I get along with the boys and it's barely possible that my plan for boys will work with your girls. I make it a point to have them get along with me."

I used her formula and it worked, eventually.

The error that I had committed was in showing that I was annoyed by their unfriendly attitude. I had gone on the assumption that they should be disciplined, but owing to my regard for the sex I had expected their reaction to be somewhat different from what it was.

They were quick to observe that I was annoyed and were quick to take advantage of my discomfiture.

My trouble with girls for a time grew worse instead of better. I adopted the plan of requiring them to get along with me. It may have been an eye for an eye proposition, but I adopted it. Boys and girls who showed the right attitude received splendid treatment and to those who did not, I showed no quarter.

With this plan in operation, troubles began to accumulate and before the end of the first month Kansas had quite a following, but strange to say she kept herself in the clear. On the last Friday afternoon of the first month Mollie McGuire, the prettiest and poutiest girl in the school, very abruptly corrected me on the pronunciation of a word. I had pronounced it correctly, but as there was no dictionary, I had no way of proving it. However, the pronunciation of the word was a minor consideration just then.

There is at such times a consideration which

every teacher must some time face—"Shall the teacher assume a personal or an objective attitude?"

It may occur to the reader that up to this time I had assumed the personal attitude, but such was not the case. On the playground I had been but an individual. Outside of school I had not assumed the teacher attitude, but in school, I had assumed the teacher attitude and had made it plain that as teacher there were certain responsibilities that I must bear and that their attitude toward the teacher must be one of respect for those responsibilities upon which the good of the whole school depended.

Mollie was promptly excused from recitation. Later, when another class to which she belonged was called, she came forward. After the class was seated she was again sent to her seat.

As school for the day, the week and the month was about to be closed, I saw enacted an old trick. Mollie had all her books piled out on top of her desk. Mollie was quitting school. Indeed, it was not a new trick, for once I had done that very thing myself. How well I remembered it just then. My teacher came to me and pleaded with me not to take my books, and I left them, but I left them with an understanding that I must be treated just right or next time she couldn't coax me back. It was a great bluff. Once when we had what we thought to be an unusually stubborn teacher, six of us stacked our

books and won out. Now, in Mollie I had a formidable foe. Her father was a board member, and board members' children in rural schools are problems to be solved. Mollie was, also, quite a church worker. She played the organ and sang while she played; she was pretty and popular with all her schoolmates, and was therefore a most redoubtable enemy.

Well, Mollie had struck, and everyone in the school was aware of the fact. Mollie had her books all covered with red calico. This is not important, but is mentioned to show how plainly I remember details of events that happened about twenty-five years ago.

In a subsequent chapter I speak of closing school with a song. I think I should have sung alone on this memorable evening, because feeling was running high.

Punishment must be certain, swift, and unerring. The teacher must leave no doubt in the minds of the pupils as to who is the real victor, and I began early to show the school. It was time for closing, but I was timekeeper and the only timepiece there was in my pocket.

I had yet some unfinished work, but I stopped to ask Mollie if it was her intention to quit school. She assured me that such was her intention, and at once she was granted permission to go. She went.

That was many years ago, but to-day I consider it was good management. I never allowed a pupil to pass out with the school either at intermission or after school who was giving the impression that he was getting ahead of the school. Those are the times when public opinion is formed. Those are the times when a pupil is encouraged to do things that he otherwise would not do.

Mollie left school unaided and alone. As soon as she had gone I began to reconstruct my school by arbitrarily changing the seats of all the larger girls. In the changing, Mollie's seat, which of course was a back one (a back seat is a seat of honor and is the one I always had), was taken by Kansas.

If there is ever a time when a boy or group of boys feel clean and wholesome and want to walk on tiptoe just to please you it is when they feel the girls are getting their deserts. To the average boy it's the thrill of a lifetime.

It is perfectly safe policy to pursue a route that leads to a certain place if you are going to that certain place. I had set out to effect the control of several very nice but badly spoiled young ladies. My next move was to dismiss the boys and all the small girls, and to the credit of all of them they went orderly and respectfully.

When the girls were alone I gave them a kind talk without any suggestion of relenting. They

were told in plain terms how very good they were as young women, and how very bad they were as pupils. They were told that on Monday we should begin all over again to pursue the same policy of demanding absolute obedience, and that all girls who conformed to my regulations would receive the best of treatment and every privilege that I could consistently grant. But I held out no hope for the girl who pouted or who offered any but the most courteous treatment to the teacher.

Those days were dark and troublesome. To win in such an ordeal makes one respected throughout the community. To lose means just the opposite. Public opinion is a great asset when you have it in your favor, but after all it is an unsafe index as to the right or wrong of a certain cause. Public opinion is usually the opinion of two or three in which the unthinking masses concur. The wise teacher will try hard to control public opinion, but he should never allow himself to feel that public opinion is based upon a public conscience, for the public may be against you to-day and for you to-morrow.

It is so with nations. It is so with the grandstand, whether it be a national political convention in Chicago, a prize fight in Cuba or a bullfight in Juarez—the victor becomes the hero of thousands while the vanquished lies bleeding and alone. It was always that way. Cicero was driven from Rome,

returned in triumph, and again with hisses and scourges and curses driven out, and all for naught but on account of public opinion. The beaten must not look for sympathy. Hannibal and Bonaparte, Calvin and Luther, politicians, financiers, prize-fighters, gladiators have learned or will learn of the fickleness of public opinion.

Men with real convictions and courage are rare combinations. Sometimes such combinations make up parts of school boards and boards of education, and sometimes they do not. The smaller the school unit the smaller is the probability of finding the combination, and when it is wholly lacking the position of the teacher is far from being an enviable one.

Every person of school experience has a teacher who is his ideal, and one whose advice he would rely upon. In my trouble I thought of my ideal teacher, and although it was a half-day's ride, I went to see him.

My ideal teacher was the one to whom I went immediately after completing my rural school education. It was he who gave me to understand that nothing short of absolute obedience to the rules and regulations would keep me within his good graces. It was he who taught me that nothing was too good for the pupil who tried to do right.

With this teacher as an ideal I began my first school.

With him for an ideal I taught my first school and many succeeding ones. To him I went to give my experiences of my first month and receive his approval or disapproval. He gave me neither. After hearing my story, he asked, " Do you feel that you have done right? " I answered in the affirmative. He then said, as he pressed my hand in a good-bye, " Begin Monday where you left off yesterday."

I returned to my school fully believing that I would succeed.

Monday morning school opened with Mollie in her seat. She had returned! Kansas was in the same seat, and again did it seem that an unpleasantness was to be met. When I went to the seat to make my decision, both girls stood awaiting my verdict. I said " Kansas, the seat is yours." Kansas replied, " Mollie may have it." Mollie, kind-hearted girl that she was, said, " No, it is your seat, Kansas."

In those days seats were selected very much as are lands in a new country. Squatters' sovereignty! Every girl who had been changed on Friday had been taken from a seat that was hers by preëmption. Possibly there were " sooners " among them.

I addressed all the girls whose seats had been changed. " Girls, I feel you would all like to have your seats again, and because of the good spirit shown by these two girls, I am going to ask each of you to take back the seat you had. In doing so I want

it to be with a resolve that your whole attitude toward the school is to change."

Sometimes in months to come we had troublesome days but the fashion of unruliness among girls went out that morning not to return, and the teacher learned for the first time that girls like to be managed and are quite as amenable to discipline as boys, and like the boys they are most apt in detecting the weaknesses of the opposite sex. The teacher who would succeed in managing either boys or girls must make it possible for them to get along with him. A certain reasonableness is necessary.

CHAPTER VII

Managing the School Board

School Boards can be managed, but they cannot be bossed, and there is a wide difference between managing and bossing. No board will be bossed, but any self-respecting board will be managed. The teacher who desires to manage a board must first of all have well-defined plans. He must know that his plans have merit. The measures that he seeks to carry out must be for a public benefit. The teacher, then, who has certain well-defined, meritorious plans which when carried out will be a benefit to the public for whom he is employed is ready to interview his board.

In addition to this preparation it is necessary that there be nothing but the best of feeling between the teacher and the board. School boards are, after all, human; and the average human being is swayed more by his feelings than by his judgment. It must not be supposed that a school board who feels right towards its teacher will not be controlled by its judgment. In other words, the average individual will permit his feelings of animosity to control his actions and defeat good measures, but will not permit feelings

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of friendliness to influence his vote for a proposition which he does not believe is sound.

The above enunciated human frailty is in evidence in all walks of life. The opposition is always the more active. A man's enemies will make bigger sacrifices to attend the election and help secure his defeat than will his friends to secure his election. The successful candidate is more likely to owe his election to the activity of his opponent's enemies than to his own popularity.

Accepting the foregoing statements as true, it is proper to state that a teacher who has a good proposition can get favorable action on it by a board who are in harmony with each other and with the teacher provided they can be convinced that it is a good proposition.

In convincing a board of the soundness of a proposition, there is often a lifetime prejudice to be broken down. Certain conditions have always existed so far as they know, and so far as they know they should continue to exist.

A friend of the writer moved to town. He cast his first vote against the waterworks and sewer propositions. He had always gotten along with a well, and it was good enough. He never had had running water in his house and did not believe he wanted it. He had always been accustomed to the outhouse that stood some distance from his resi-

dence, and he did not believe two dozen such buildings on the alley of the block in which he lived would be very bad.

Later he voted against street paving and electric lights. On each proposition he was defeated, and each time he could see his bank account dwindling.

In a few years the alley outhouses had been removed. The residences had running water, and the back yards were beautiful lawns and gardens. The streets, that had been beds of dust when not beds of mud, were macadam, and his oil lamps, relics of the past, were in the room with his grandmother's spinning wheel, the "hand" sewing machine and the candle moulds.

When he had all these things, none was more enthusiastic over them than he. He said, "I am glad that I have lived to enjoy all these blessings. There is nothing that I have enjoyed more than my modern home." He took a visitor over his little city. He showed him the parks, the boulevards, the court-house, whose bonds he had tried to defeat, and the new $300,000 high school building. He went about the exhibition of this school building in a way that showed perfect familiarity.

First they inspected the heating plant and the ventilation system, then the boys' gymnasium with its swimming pool 40 x 100 feet, then the girls' gymnasium and swimming pool, toilets with run-

ning water, lavatories, mirrors and towels, the large manual training room, rooms for domestic science fitted up with every modern cooking convenience, domestic art, physics, chemistry and botany laboratories, large well-furnished class rooms, a magnificent library with comfortable chairs and tables, and last the assembly room, which had all the appearance of an up-to-date theatre.

The old man, for he was old then, with a look of pride said, "It's all very nice, but it cost us taxpayers a lot of money; but," he added, quickly, "it's worth it. I never had any of these things, and I'm glad to be able to give them to others."

"Do you know," said he, "that this building is a small concern compared with the state educational institutions? We support those institutions and they have gymnasiums that cost as much as this entire building. I understand that only five out of every hundred who go to high schools ever attend one of those higher institutions. I always was in favor of state schools. I always believed in higher education, but I am afraid that I was slow in awakening to the needs of those who do not get the higher education."

He grew reminiscent; "Yes sir, I'm glad to live to see all this, but I'm sorry to think of many lost opportunities. Before I came here I was on the school board. I thought our school was good enough, but I know now it wasn't. Why, we con-

sidered but one thing in managing our school, and that was keeping down the tax.

"In hiring a teacher, the question was 'Who will do it the cheapest?' We used the cheapest material for blackboard that we could buy, and we bought the cheapest crayon on the market. If we painted the building it was done to preserve it, not to make it more beautiful. One fall we needed more desks and we bought some second-hand ones that had been taken out of a town school to make place for adjustable ones. We had no library and did not want one. Our teacher wanted a large dictionary one year, but since our school was not far advanced we got her a small one.

"When I go about the schools in this town and see their smooth playgrounds with their base-ball parks and tennis courts I am reminded of our school yard for whose upkeep I was responsible. We let it grow up in weeds during the summer and cut them about September first, just when they would leave a stubble that would ruin a good shoe, saying nothing of what it would do to bare feet. I find myself comparing what our home boys had, who worked hard and went to school but a few months every year, with that of the boys who attended the state schools. We sent but two in ten years from our district to college, and during all that time we were helping to support those schools, but we did not support our

own little school. Mind, I am not sorry we supported the state schools, but I am ashamed now to think how we treated our home boys and girls. They had no gymnasium, no library, no swimming pool, no playground apparatus, no athletic director, and the schoolhouse itself was about the poorest building in the district. Of course, I do not put all this blame on myself. If I had wanted things much different it would have done but little good; the others would have outvoted me, and besides our district was small and the valuation low."

The old man's confession was indicative of the facts that he could have been managed; that he had acted according to his light; that earlier in his life he could have been convinced of the benefits of a good library, a good playground, a good school building; that he could have been taught ere he had committed irreparable wrongs that low tax levies for education generally mean misappropriation of the people's money and the misguidance of their children. But these changes could not have been effected without some effort. I learned quite early that the teacher, if he would manage a board, must be something more than tactful. He must be persistent. On the second day of school I had made partial arrangements for a meeting of the board, but at the end of one month the meeting had not been held.

This failure to have a meeting was no one's fault

in particular. The board members lived quite a distance apart, and they were all anxious for a meeting, but we could not meet. There was the cutting of prairie hay, millet and corn; the sowing of the fall wheat and the rye; cattle were soon to be taken from the range, and corrals had to be repaired.

There was so much that I needed that I was afraid to begin my enumeration. I wanted new desks. The ones we had were of the old double seat kind, whittled and scarred till the most respected property owner would involuntarily reach for his knife to further enhance their ugliness. In my later teaching of psychology I never fail to use those old desks in making concrete illustration of the "Idea Motor." The suggestiveness that comes from our environment is perhaps the greatest of educational factors. Environment and association determine our disposition, whether it be gloomy or cheerful; our tastes, whether they be vulgar or refined; our talents, whether for languages or mathematics, bad literature or good.

Desks broken, ink-stained and carved! Walls, plaster broken, pencilled and smoked! Windows curtainless; maps, globes, charts and dictionary lacking! The old stove was badly cracked, the long pipe sagged and was about to fall.

The outbuildings were so bad as to make their description out of place.

The school building faced the east. The girls all sat on the south side of the room. The four windows on the south had neither shutter, blind nor shade, and when the sun was shining the girls were most uncomfortable, and from what I was able to learn, it had always been just that way.

How could I expect young people to be good and clean minded, or ambitious to be other than what they were, with such an environment? A noted lecturer speaks of a gossiping, slanderous old woman, who was fairly decent and respectable when she had on good clothes. She would not disgrace her clothes. Good environment makes for good behavior.

It is possible for us to modify our environment. It is possible for us to assume a hostile attitude toward a fixed environment, thereby modifying our lives, but it is unreasonable to expect such attitudes in the average normal child.

Shakespeare aptly and forcefully expresses the belief that one may so direct his life as to change his real nature, in the thought where Hamlet pleads with his mother to refrain from certain unseemly and sinful acts:

> "Assume a virtue if you have it not.
> That monster custom who all sense doth eat
> Of habits, devil, is angel yet in this;
> Refrain tonight and that shall lend an easiness
> To the next abstinence; the next more easy,
> For *use* almost can change the stamp of nature."

Thus, use may change the bad to good, and this is a comforting thought. On the other hand, we must, as guardians of child welfare, remember it works both ways. Goodness begets goodness, and evil begets evil; and if we would have children become good men and women with beautiful characters and with lofty ideals, we must surround them with the good and the beautiful.

In writing of this school I offer it as a type. Our parents of two and three generations back have been pleased to point to the improvements in education. They have mentioned with much pride the physical changes; the old fireplace has been supplanted by furnace and steam heat; the puncheon bench, by the modern seat and desk. These improved conditions do exist in some favored sections, but yet the school of which I write is far from being an isolated case, even in this twentieth century, which marks the highest point attained in educational advancement. The schools that are managed or mismanaged by young, inexperienced, and poorly prepared teachers may be numbered by the thousands in almost any state in the union, and America's educational status is not second to that of any nation on earth. The schoolhouses that are provided in the same careless, thoughtless way by good men but by men too engrossed with their personal affairs, and who are thor-

oughly incompetent to administer to the cause of education, are among the abundant remains of a past glory that has failed to keep up with the progress indicated in other great world activities.

I had started out to boss the schoolboard but concluded to manage it, and for the accomplishing of this I determined to make for myself invincible allies, and these were the daughters of the community. A month following the reconstruction of my girls I called a meeting of the older girls for 4 P.M.

At this meeting I made a proposition to the girls that I would buy the material if they would make the curtains for the windows on their side of the schoolroom.

The first one to respond was Mollie. She gave it out plainly enough that she would help make no curtains, and if it had come to pass that the school board could not fix up the old schoolhouse, and that strangers had to come in and pay for things, she surely would quit school and stay quit.

The daughter, who had helped me out with her father on the morning of the second day, and who was always a good girl, backed by Mollie, condemned the board and their methods of not doing their duty, before I could interpose an objection. There was real rebellion threatened. This time it

was the board who was about to be attacked, and I found the objective attitude easy to assume.

I talked to those girls in a way that increased their activities without giving offense. It was all right for those girls to censure their parents, but it would have been ruinous to the cause had I said one derogatory word.

I tried to show the girls that while the building was horribly out of repair, they must not censure their fathers. Their fathers were very busy men, and besides they might feel that the people in the district would not like for them to incur such expense as would be necessary. This divided the responsibility, and each girl seemed to feel that her father ought to help fix up the schoolhouse.

On the Sunday following, at the close of the sermon, William Constad, who was, as he said, not as long on church as some of his neighbors, arose and asked permission to make a few remarks.

Mr. Constad had been the object of prayers for years. He was the annual " stumbling block," " the clog in the wheels of religious progress," and his rising to speak caused quite a little flutter, but he did not keep them long in suspense. He simply announced: " The school board will meet in this house to-morrow night and it wants all the men in the district to turn out."

Mr. Constad possessed a fair amount of humor and enjoyed, as I afterwards learned, "a little satire." He was fond of saying that women should not be allowed to vote at school meetings, that they did not pay taxes, and that they knew nothing about running schools, and therefore should stay away from such places as school meetings. Consequently his invitation to the men to turn out was understood by everyone to include the women.

CHAPTER VIII

The Community Meeting

On Monday evening, "pursuant to call," the men of the district met with the school board, and with these men and school board met twenty women, and it was evident from the first that there was a unanimity of purpose among the women. But with the men it was different. Every man had an opinion and it was entirely different from anyone else's. One man thought the plastering should be patched, and another thought it should all come off and that a new coat should be put on. One was in favor of painting and another was against painting, but everyone believed something ought to be done.

The meeting was called to order. The deplorable condition of the entire premises was thoroughly discussed, but it was finally suggested that nothing could be done without money, and that the expense of improvement would mean an increased tax levy.

Mr. Constad, who had expressed no opinion, arose and made, as he said, "a few remarks." His remarks ran about as follows:

"I am getting mighty tired of this school business. Every year we have to pay a tax and then we do not get much. You men are just like me; you'll

pay a thousand dollars for a good brood animal and think you are using good business sense. You come here and vote the lowest tax possible for running this school and you think that's good business sense.

" We use this building for church, for elections and all other kinds of public meetings, and yet as my girls said to-night it's the poorest building in this part of the country. Half the time people call this school the Constad School, just because I live nearest to it, and I am getting tired of having my name stuck onto a shack that I'd tear down if it were my own. Now, what you have said about not having any money is true, and we all know why we have no money. We come here every year and instead of voting all the money we need, we vote the lowest amount possible. I spend more money every year on improvement of cattle than we all spend on education. We are just the same way about our church. We pay the lowest possible price for a preacher and then kick because he isn't all right.

" This schoolhouse is going to be fixed up to look as well as the average house in this neighborhood, and the outhouses are going to be set farther apart, straightened up, painted outside and inside; this school yard is going to be fixed up to look as well as my feed lots, or Bill Constad is going to get off this board."

This was a great speech for William Constad.

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The oldest settler had never heard him say so much in public before.

After his speech came that of Mr. McGuire. It did not require great discernment to see that Mollie had been bossing him. He believed all that Mr. Constad had said, but where the money was coming from he could not tell.

Mrs. House, who had been working among the women while the speeches were being made, had an idea and she begged permission to state it. Her idea was as follows: " I have $500, and I'll loan it to the school board till the next annual meeting, and trust to the honor of these people to make the levy large enough to pay me back."

Mr. Constad arose and said: " This school board is borrowing no money. All who want this property put in shape and are willing to come out to the next annual meeting and make a levy to pay for it, stand." Everyone but the teacher, who was simply an outsider, stood. " Now," said Mr. Constad, " this board is going right to work to fix up this property. We held a meeting this afternoon and decided upon the following:

New floor.
New desks.
Slate blackboard.
Teacher's desk and chair.
Outhouses relocated, repaired and painted.

All plastering removed and the building re-plastered.

Buildings given two coats of paint.

New porch and steps.

Yard graded.

New hitch racks."

Old man Benson showed signs of great nervousness when he arose to inquire, "What's it all going to cost?"

Mr. Constad replied, "We do not know, and what's more, we do not care. We expect to use good business judgment and get a good job for the money, and we are going to spend enough money to get a good job."

A motion to adjourn was said to be in order, but Mrs. McGuire, a meek little woman, interrupted that procedure by addressing her husband, "Andy, you forgot something you promised."

"Oh, yes," said Mr. McGuire, "I forgot to mention to the board that we ought to get a big dictionary."

"Yes," said Mr. Constad, "I was to have mentioned that too, and it seems to me it's about time we were getting another broom." A lady in the audience added her mite by, "Yes, and a new stove."

The meeting adjourned and the teacher had not said a word, nor had he been asked to say a word, but he was happy because he was getting results.

The teacher *is* an outsider, and there is at times the line which he dares not cross. He is looked upon as everyone's friend, no one's opponent. A teacher need not feel that in public matters he is discriminated against. As a matter of fact the attitude that he may assume because of his position enables him to work the more effectively. In this case the teacher was accomplishing great results, and to have the community feel that these results were matters of their own doing was the greatest result of all. Political leaders would, but cannot, assume the impersonal attitude. It is the teacher's Gibraltar, and its occupancy by anyone else is an impossibility. From it he can, unmolested, direct the activities of the world.

CHAPTER IX

Repairing the School Building

Such radical changes as had been agreed upon by the board, and assented to by the leading citizens, put new life into the community. While the contemplated changes would interfere with the school work, this in itself was a good thing, for it directed attention to the school. School overshadowed all other local affairs. The improvements would mean for all taxpayers an additional expenditure. This gave an added importance to the individual, and many who had never given a passing thought to school matters began to feel the responsibility. All realized that an unusual thing was about to be done, and that it was all indicative of unparalleled generosity and public spiritedness.

In consequence of the certainty of the improvement and its accompanying expense, everyone became an enthusiastic supporter of education. Mr. Benson, who hated taxes of all kinds and would have gladly forfeited all their benefits if by so doing he could have avoided their payment, professed a deep interest in education and said that a tax for the support of the school was one that he always gladly paid.

Tuesday morning was one of great excitement

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in the school. Every pupil seemed to share in the responsibility. Everyone was talking of the new work that was about to be undertaken, and the importance of it all was nothing short of pathetic. Pupils who never had shown any pride in the school or in the community, began to discuss the relative greatness of their school and the surrounding schools. Maple Hill, Burr Oak, and Windy Ridge, each in its turn, suffered by comparison, and well it might. None of them was its equal in taxable property nor in school enrollment. Ours was the political, social and religious centre. The announcement of any attraction at the Constad Crossing school house aroused the people for miles in all directions. Constad Crossing was the logical and actual community centre and all others were but as isolated parts. This was the real condition, but up to that time it had been unrecognized and unappreciated.

In its anticipated newness all eyes were opened to its greatness. The beautiful valley of over twenty thousand acres of the richest land in the state, and uplands surpassed by none in the state, the beautiful and heavily wooded stream which divided it but gave it charm and beauty, were held in favorable comparison with the neighbors' possessions on the north, east, south and west.

There are two communities that are less influenced by the onward march of human progress

than any others. In this age of scientific farming, science is slow in touching the activities of these two communities. These communities are the one possessed of the richest lands and the one possessed of the poorest lands.

The former has never felt the need of the friendly help of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and of agricultural colleges, because their lands yield bountifully and it never has occurred to them that it will not always be so. The latter, who live on the stony barren uplands, the traders, feel no interest in those things which if they possessed would not affect their well being. In neither of these communities is one likely to find the highest types of development, owing to the fact that each is lacking in incentives. The Constad Crossing neighborhood was of the former type. In an early day these people settled there, and without effort on their part became wealthy. Their incomes were large and their expenditures were small. In matters pertaining to the intellectual, social and spiritual they lacked persistency. They were easily aroused to action, but hard to keep in action.

Indeed there is a close parallelism between rural schools, rural churches, and rural social life, and the prevailing type of agriculture. If the type is that which consists of garnering in the sheaves, taking

away but never giving back, the type of religious practice will be the same.

The Constad Crossing religious harvest came regularly, at rest periods, just before the corn husking season and again after the corn was husked. In other words, their revival seasons came when there was nothing to interfere. I have intimated that there was a parallelism between their farming and their religious practice. They gave little attention to conservation in either, but much to conversion in both. They relied more on converting the adult than in training and saving the young boys and girls, and this is bad practice. The farm that is robbed of its fertility and allowed to run to cockle burrs and other noxious weeds will be difficult of reclamation. With the boy or girl who is allowed to drift till the mind becomes dwarfed and evil habits are formed, reclamation will be difficult and uncertain and the boy or girl, like the infertile, foul land, may never properly react to normal stimuli.

Plans for a radical improvement of the schoolhouse and premises had been agreed upon, and such men as composed the board, when once agreed, were not slow to act. Two objections to immediate action were offered. The regular revival season was just to open, and school was in session. To neither of these would Mr. Constad pay any attention. His stand on the school interference caused no particular

comment, but his interference with the meetings made him the object of many enthusiastic prayers offered in his behalf at the cottage prayer meetings, which were held at the homes because of being denied, temporarily, the use of the schoolhouse.

However, the changes were all effected within one month's time and school was in session all but the last two weeks.

Four weeks from the day of William Constad's "announcement" the building was open for "services." New hitch racks had been constructed along the north and the east. The hedge fence on the south and west had been taken out by the roots and burned and replaced with a good board fence. This improvement is dwelt upon because of its importance. The hedge in many ways was a nuisance, and the grounds, being open on the north, easily invited public travel across the school grounds. The hitch racks stopped all driving of vehicles across the school grounds, which had been leveled. The long porch extending the full length of the front had been replaced by a new one, and every improvement decided upon by the board had been made, including the broom, stove, and big dictionary.

The morning service held under the new and more favorable conditions was no great success. No one felt at ease. The malefactors who had arbitrarily closed the doors against the revivalists were all

there. To their credit they always sat well to the front and while they never took an active part they always gave respectful attention and financial support.

The evening services were nearly as much of a drag as those of the morning, and were dragging to an uneventful close when Father Rose started up the hymn, "Ho, the old Time Religion, it was good enough for father and it's good enough for me." He had but fairly launched the audience into the third verse, "It is good enough for brother," when the real spirit began to work, and within an hour the new surroundings had lost their halo "in the light that never fades."

To the teacher the use of the school building for other than educational purposes has been more or less of a problem. The average teacher is in sympathy with all movements that are for the betterment of the community, but he is quite likely to feel that his first duty is to his job, and that the discouragement of anything that interferes with the success of his job lies directly in his path of duty.

In my effecting the improvement of the school's physical condition I had achieved a great victory, but this victory was due to accident rather than to my good judgment. Had conditions been favorable to the acting upon the impulses that sent me out to boss the school board, failure and not success would

have attended my effort. Had I failed to gain the good will of the right man, nothing worth while would have been accomplished.

After the improvement had been made it was my desire to put the school itself on a better footing than it had been, but the school was not the community interest, and on the reopening of school I discovered that it was far from being a matter of interest to the pupils themselves.

Understanding the conditions, the reader need not be surprised that I should say that " four weeks from the day of William Constad's ' announcement ' the building was open for ' services.' "

With the closing of the song everyone knew that the revival season was on, and everyone soon thought he knew that the teacher in the Constad school was opposed to everything religious and moral. This opinion was based upon the fact that I gave my pupils to understand that they could not sleep in school even though they had been out at church the night before, and that I should hold them responsible for their school work whether they attended church or not. Had I deliberately set about to alienate all of my friends I could have chosen no better course. The church people at once gave me a classification no teacher can afford to accept. To be considered against the church is certain to work disaster. In my dilemma I was at a loss to find an ally. Constad

was not my man. He, himself, was not considered in matters affecting the community's spirituality. It was plainly to be seen that I could look for no support from Father and Mother Rose. They believed in me, but this belief was not to be permanent if I failed to give the religious movement my undivided support. After a very unpleasant interview with these two good friends, I sought advice from Mr. Constad, who to my surprise was as far from approving my course as any of the others. He did not deny that my position was a correct one, but he thought it was not the only correct position. He believed in school, but he recognized an importance in connection with the church which he felt I should not ignore, and would not ignore if I would succeed with my school. He favored my pursuing a conservative rather than an extreme policy, and showed me quite plainly that the church, regardless of denomination, was as much an agency of civilization as the school, and was therefore as much entitled to consideration and support.

To my discomfort he showed me that my objection to the meetings was as much due to my estimate of the denomination holding the meetings as to their interference with the work of the school.

Through his temperate presentation of the subject I was led to see that my position was not only an untenable one, but that it was one that might work

an injury to others than myself. The teacher above all others is one person who must not be considered as allied with those forces that are destructive to the best interests of society.

Upon leaving him, I determined upon a course which I believed, and do believe to this day, was consistent with what was to the best interests of the young people under my care.

Instead of opposing the meetings I would give them my support. Instead of being counted against the church, which I was not, I would be counted for it, which I was. The results were good. The minister was quite willing to give me support. He preached early in the series on the importance of education. He showed very forcibly that good church members must be supporters of education.

The meetings had been in progress but a few evenings before I discovered this community, like all communities, had problems too great for the school. As a teacher I was seeing educational problems without seeing that their solution is dependent upon the solution of certain social problems. I had yet to learn that the school, unaided by other agencies, *i.e.*, the home and the church, can not build up a wholesome social life, and that these three, the home, school and church, are organically bound together and constitute the only safe basis for society.

CHAPTER X

A Rural Social Problem

There is a rural social problem just as there is a city social problem. There are those who contend that there is a greater social problem affecting cities than affecting rural communities. This is not a question that can be definitely settled nor is it a question that needs to be settled. There is a rural social problem and it is great enough to enlist the attention of the sociologist.

It is said that there is little or no pauperism in the rural districts; that there are no slums and that social vice is unknown.

It is true that these bad social conditions are not found in rural communities, but it is no less true that bad social conditions of the cities are worse because of this fact. The rural degenerate and the rural unfortunate for obvious reasons drift to the cities. The divorce evil is said to be greater in cities than in rural communities. The city affords less publicity to delinquency than does the open country. The city makes possible greater independence of one's associates, and in consequence thereof the city gets the refuse and the drift from its tributary territory as surely as the main river of a system

gets the wreckage caused by the flood devastations of all the rivers of the entire basin.

There is one point that is all-important, and important as it is, is commonly overlooked. That point is the absolute dependence of rural people in social matters. As stated above, the criminal, the pauper, and the unfortunate drift to the city. It is absolutely necessary that they shall. The human being cannot live unto himself. However, the rural community has the undesirable element, and keeps it till it reaches the intolerable stage. The dependence of the baser element is no greater than that of the better element, and herein is the problem. A boy and a girl may grow up in a city with all its evils and vices and never know of their existence. They may pass through the public schools without any personal contact with the vicious. The opportunity for selection is unlimited. The good may find their kind just as the bad may find theirs—each is independent of the other and each is happy to be left out of the other's consideration. In the rural community an exactly opposite condition presents itself. The small number makes all dependent on each other and the smaller the unit the greater this dependency, and the greater is the difficulty of escaping the contaminating influence of the evil.

The rowdy element, of which no community, rural or urban, is entirely free, is less restrained in

the outlying rural communities. There are several reasons for this, but the greatest is that of dependency. The sober, steady-going, self-respecting element, while disapproving, dare not ignore the fact that those who live in their midst and who are capable of doing them serious injury must not be offended. This point is well illustrated in a case occurring during this same year but in another neighborhood.

The teacher was at the head of what would be called to-day a community welfare league. He arranged literary programs and upon certain occasions read popular lectures to his audiences. These were especially enjoyed by a great majority of his audiences, but there was that rowdy, lawless element whose ideals and thoughts were low. This element, though small, began to disturb the meetings with the avowed purpose of breaking them up. In a city these toughs would have been summarily fined or jailed, probably both, but here they operated unopposed except by the teacher, who after a most serious affront had several parties arrested, and as he expressed it later, he himself was almost convicted.

This must not be interpreted to mean that moral courage is more lacking in rural than in urban communities. It is a condition surrounded with responsibilities that are most grave, but there is an organization which as a moralizing influence cannot be overestimated. It, like its sister organization of the

city, may be short in its proper activities, but it is absolutely the most essential organization for the protection of society. By city writers it is criticised as being inefficient, but without it life would be intolerable. It is superfluous to tell the reader that this organization is the rural church. Wherever it is in evidence, in the lowlands of Arkansas, or in the mountains of Montana, the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains or the prairies of Western Kansas and Eastern Colorado, man is reasonably secure in person and property.

Occasionally the rural church, like the rural school, gets jobs of too great an undertaking; sometimes the rowdy element is too strong and the minister is too weak, and then results are very bad indeed.

Soon after the revival started, trouble from the rough element began. (I must warn my reader not to associate too closely this crowd with the Constad Crossing neighborhood.) They came from miles around. Drinking and carousing were not uncommon in those early days of attempted prohibition, and they were much in evidence at many public gatherings, and very much in evidence at those meetings where good men and women were gathered to rescue and to save. Young men of great strength of body but weak in morals visited those meetings.

They came drinking and cursing, defying both God and man.

The average individual likes attention, and these fellows prided themselves on their toughness, glorying in it because it brought them up for prayerful consideration. The louder the prayers, the louder the profanity, because it meant louder-yet prayers. After an unusually rough evening the minister announced that on the following evening he was going to fight the devil with fire. "To-morrow evening I propose to begin 'backfiring,'" he announced. After church he called to one side a young man of powerful build and engaged him in conversation. The young man was Jack Graham. Jack was a decent young man. He was steady-going but he was not religious. Just decent, and honest, and hard-working, and good-natured. The minister said, "Jack, I need you. I feel that I must have your help or these meetings will fail."

Jack said, "I have told you I won't pray, and I can't sing. If you ever ask me again to come to that mourners' bench, I'll never come again to hear you preach." "No, Jack," said the minister, "I do not want you to pray, I do not want you to sing, I do not want you to come to the mourners' bench, but Jack, when we are singing to-morrow evening, and when we are praying, and when we are at the mourners' bench, I want you to be as far from the

mourners' bench as you can get and still be in the house. I want you to be my fire with which to fight the devil. Get right among those poor drunken sinners and get them to keep quiet—so they can hear the singing and the praying, and the confessions of the penitent. You keep order, Jack, and the rest of us will do the praying and the singing. Do this, Jack. I wish you could pray, Jack. You would be a power if you could."

Jack quietly answered, "I would just as soon be fire one night or so, but I won't pray."

The following evening bid fair to furnish considerable entertainment. The devil had been working pretty hard, and to just a casual observer it would appear that he was considerably in the lead.

Old Sim Nayson, the vilest of men, had professed conversion the previous winter. He was without decent clothes, and Father Rose fitted him out in good clothes, even to overshoes and overcoat, and after he had fed him he gave him a Bible. Within twenty-four hours after being outfitted he was staggering drunk and bragging of what religion had done for him. It had clothed him and fed him, and he recommended it to his friends. He had the effrontery to publicly boast that the present meetings would bring him another suit of clothes. As to the Bible, the one he got last year was as good as new. To his idle listeners he was great amusement.

The meetings had not been well started before old Sim began to lay his plans for new clothes. He went regularly to the mourners' bench, but as he expressed it, he always got on the end where there was no business, and consequently received no special mention in prayers.

The meeting as usual opened with singing, and the house was crowded to the door. Curiosity seemed to have had a quieting effect—the toughs were all there but in the earlier part of the meeting were more quiet than usual.

The song service was followed by a sermon which was a strong appeal. The minister was so much in earnest that it seemed that none would be so hardened as not to be touched. The sermon was followed by the usual invitation to the mourners' bench, and on first call Mr. Sim Nayson went forward.

This was a signal for the rowdies, and during a song Manly Wixon, a large, rawboned, red-whiskered, red-faced tough of about twenty-five years, began to swear and create a disturbance. Then the back-firing started.

Jack went quietly to him, laid his hands on his shoulder and said, " The minister wants to have your soul saved, Manly Wixon, but I don't. I think you ought to go to hell soul and body; if you make the least disturbance I am going to knock you through

that window. Now, Manly, do not take this to mean that I want you to keep quiet. I want you to make a noise; I want you to swear so they can all hear you, and when they look around, they all will get to see you smashing through the window."

It was very quiet now in the rowdy corner. Everybody knew Jack, and they knew he never promised anything which he did not do.

Such methods of gaining the attention of one's audience will hardly meet with the approval of some modern disciplinarians. To resort to such tactics was an acknowledgment of that minister's weakness. It was a direct resort to brute force. Men are not won in that way. To compel obedience is not to touch the heart, and the individual is the same afterwards as before. Maybe so. Maybe so. Manly Wixon was a bad man. His influence was for the very worst. He had a good mind but he used it for purposes most vile. Manly Wixon, relieved of the necessity and of even an opportunity of putting on a show, began to look around, and later to give his attention to the meeting which was progressing under the newly favorable conditions.

The last call for sinners was sent out, and to the surprise and joy of everyone, ugly, rawboned, red-faced Manly Wixon started to the mourners' bench. Down beside the whisky-soaked young man, who but a brief hour before was cursing in his anger

"the sniffling hypocrites," knelt his gray-haired, praying mother. At his other side knelt his saintly old father, and at the end of those prayers, Manly Wixon arose—a *man*. Manly Wixon has stood the test of time. Since that night he has not only led an upright life, and borne a good reputation among his fellowmen, but he has worked his way through college and has preached the gospel and has been a power for good in the church.

"Old Jack," as he was lovingly called, couldn't sing and wouldn't pray, but he stood for decency, and had his reward, for he himself became the object of Manly Wixon's affections, and later walked in his footsteps. But how about Simeon Nayson! On this night he knelt unattended and unprayed. Not unprayed entirely, either. Just at the close of this eventful night,—the night when they back-fired on the devil,—when all was still, and the benediction was about to be pronounced, the minister passed to the kneeling Sim—Sim, who had boasted of the great benefits of an every-day religion—whole suit, and cap, overcoat and shoes, plus a Holy Bible.

The minister laid his hand on Simeon's head and in clear tones pronounced the following, which sounded like a malediction:

"Oh, Lord, Thou knowest if this man be in earnest.
If he be, Oh, Lord, bless him.
If not, smite him. AMEN.

The work of the rural church is peculiar in the sense that every efficient organization must be peculiar—it must meet conditions as they are found. The rural church to be efficient must, in its own way, do its particular work. It would be as great a mistake to try to "citify" a rural church as it would be to try to "ruralize" a city school. Each must render service to its own constituency and by its own peculiar methods.

CHAPTER XI

Managing Boys

Generally considered, boys make the real problems of discipline. In the Crossing School the boy problem was an ever-present one, due to several causes.

Probably the first which presented itself was that caused by irregular entrance to school. The new boy always seemed to feel the obligation of affording a certain amount of entertainment to the school, and the boys who were already in school, in turn felt impelled to show the newcomer their accomplishments, which usually involved "a putting" of a few things "over" on the teacher. In one or two instances, notably one, the late arrival had been somewhat notorious for his misdoings in the school of former years. Since reformation is not looked upon by a boy in the teens as being a particularly manly undertaking, he was expected by all, and by himself especially, to live up to the enviable reputation already established.

There is nothing more unfortunate that can come into the life of a large overgrown boy than to have him acquire the reputation for being tough. He is certain to live up to that reputation. The compelling

forces are so great that he can't resist them. He hears of his greatness everywhere. Sometimes he is admonished, but usually the admonition is administered in such a way as to urge him on and frequently with the express design of urging him on.

My ability as disciplinarian was always mentioned with "But Sam Morris has not started yet. Sam says school will last but three days after he starts. He expects to enter school on a Wednesday so as not to cause any loss of time on the teacher's part. He will make it even time."

The teachers in city schools, who have superintendents, backed by boards of education, who in turn are backed by the police, may look lightly upon such cases as the rural teacher has to face—face squarely too; but such teachers have not had the real experience. A man or woman can live a lifetime in almost any other vocation without meeting a proposition more trying.

To begin with, the teacher is a non-resident. To close with, the community is composed of residents, and they want to live peaceably among themselves, and very often the feeling is that the teacher is receiving much more than the common laborer, and if he can't handle his job without outside help, he should let someone else try it.

It is not altogether unreasonable that neighbors in rural districts should cultivate each other's friend-

ship more than do people in the towns and cities. The farmer is the most dependent person, socially speaking, in the world. He cannot change his residence if he does not like his neighbors. He must live where his business is and he must live in peace, or life is not worth living.

Many of the most intolerable social conditions in the state have grown out of school troubles. Except the line fence trouble, school trouble is second to none, and over it many lives have been lost, and in the immediate neighborhood of which I write the line fence had but a few months before exacted its death toll, and within twelve months an adjoining neighborhood had paid the price in human life of religious excitement.

With these conditions, with which I was already quite familiar, the approach of the day when the self-announced adversary of public schools was to enroll was looked forward to with no very noticeable enjoyment on my part.

He came, and as announced, he came on Wednesday. He had all the marks of a bully, and he showed his bluff in every movement. He swaggered, he talked loud, he threw his overcoat over his shoulders, presumably for the purpose of clearing for action. He chewed tobacco, and he did a good job of it. He had other frailties, but you have heard enough. The school, which had settled down to good behavior

and good feeling, was deeply impressed with Sam's arrival. The girls were plainly against him, but the boys scented a fight, and of course there was but one opinion as to its outcome and, therefore, the popularity of the one destined to defeat grew less as the one who was to win grew greater. With his increasing popularity he grew more insolent. This was in a measure encouraging, for every bad movement would justify the repulse that he would be given when the time for action arrived.

To the inexperienced teacher the foregoing remarks may need explanation.

The pupil bent on creating a disturbance works carefully for an opening. He does nothing directly. He possesses the foresight of the outlaw, and plans his attack in a way that makes detection difficult and escape possible. He works the "offensive" just enough to make the position "defensive" easy to assume. He walks heavily enough to annoy the school, but not so heavily as to make a sure case against him. He drops his books, making a loud noise, but leaving insufficient proof of his intention to justify a reprimand. He coughs so loudly as to attract attention of the whole school and the school laughs. But they should not laugh, for he says he has a very bad cold, and it can't be proved that he has not a very bad cold. Every act is studied. He knows full well that he is safe so long as an abso-

lute case cannot be made against him. The teacher may remonstrate with him for his heavy walking, for his careless handling of his books and for his loud coughing, and by that time the teacher, of course, is picking on him and "nagging" him. Instead of having a case against the pupil, the pupil has a case against the teacher; and public opinion, the most delicate and most unreliable thing on earth, turns to the culprit, and puts the "offending" teacher on the defensive. When it becomes necessary for a teacher to defend his position, he must have a preponderance of evidence or the jury, which is composed of resident citizens, will find for the plaintiff.

Therefore, it becomes necessary for the teacher who faces the expert criminal to bide his time. The term outlaw and criminal are used advisedly. True, such pupils are as yet embryonic, but unless checked they are doomed for a career that eventually leads to the prison cell. Acquaintance with the history of the vicious convicts supports the belief that vicious men were not model pupils, but on the contrary were rebellious and difficult to control. In company with a delegation of teachers, a few years ago, I visited a state penitentiary. More than one of our delegation called for prisoners who had at one time been their pupils. Some were life prisoners. No longer did these men swagger and leer and show

by every movement that they were victors. They came into the warden's office, pale, dejected, heart-broken men. There were many tears and childlike sobs. They were truly penitent, but it was a tardy penitence. Without exception they spoke of their school days—of the trouble they made. Oh, if they could only have a boy's chance once more! How different their lives would be!

A sight like this calls most loudly to the teacher to weigh carefully his responsibility. Somewhere there had been poor management and very bad discipline. Through negligence or ignorance on the part of parent or teacher, or parent and teacher, there was failure to inculcate effective ideals of respect for authority and law. This respect must be engendered or the coming generations will pay the penalty. A school uncontrolled is a kindergarten for reformatories and prisons, and weak sentimentalism is as much out of place in the teacher and as ineffective as a disciplinary measure as is faint-heartedness in a surgeon. The teacher is under as great an obligation to save the youth to a moral life as is the surgeon to save to a physical life, and failure through wilful neglect or inexcusable ignorance in the teacher or in the surgeon merits severe condemnation, and should be a bar against future practice.

For two days Sam exercised all his arts to disturb the school without stepping over the line. Just be-

fore noon on the third day he made a very poor recitation, which I believed was intentional. There were others in the class that did not do well and it was very evident that they were in an alliance with the teacher's foe. They were all asked to return to the room after a half hour's intermission and study the lesson.

As anticipated, Sam remained outside till school was called.

There was a crisis. The teacher who meets a situation like this must decide upon one of two courses: allow the offense to go unnoticed or administer proper punishment. As to what that punishment is, he alone must decide. To allow the offense to pass unnoticed means but one thing, and that is failure.

The latter of the two courses was chosen, and as well as I remember, the following is the account of my first real experience in handling a difficult question, and for it years have brought no regret. Programs should be carefully followed, but regular business should always be suspended in the interests of public safety. How teachers or parents can continue the even tenor of their ways when a child needs immediate relief is as incomprehensible as why a locomotive engineer would drive his engine after he knows there is something vitally wrong.

When the school was seated and perfectly quiet,

the pupil who had broken up schools in previous years, and who was avowedly there at this time on a similar errand, was asked to come to the front.

This was a hard situation in which to place a young man of such fame. The eyes of seventy pupils were on him. There was an expectant community waiting the returns. He was now to be weighed. Would he be found wanting? By an uncontrollable instinct, fear, which sooner or later victimizes the moral delinquent, he was driven from his position and stood before his neighbors awaiting his teacher's further will and pleasure.

The teacher's attitude was now wholly impersonal. Had it been otherwise forgiveness could have been pronounced, but the great lesson that the boy needed to have was incomplete. He had offended society and the penalty must be paid. With his eyes downcast he heard the following, so nearly as can be recalled:

"Sam, are you aware of the fact that to anyone who knows boys or men, you are very much of a coward? You are a coward from every point of view. In the first place you are a coward because you are putting up a bluff on me. You have not thought for a minute that there would be any physical encounter between you and the teacher. You made your bluff work last year and that was your ruin. If your teacher had given you what he was

well able to do and what any able-bodied man in the neighborhood would give you, were you to offer him any such insults as you offer the school, you would have been a pretty decent sort of a fellow. In the last place you are a coward, because you, without reason, allow people to cause you to mistreat a person against whom you have no really bad feeling. You may have some manhood left, but it's covered up in conceit and cowardice. In addition to your conceit and cowardice you are a most foolish person. You have made threats against an innocent person, one who has the interests of the community at heart. If your teacher then did not administer to you a sound thrashing, as he now intends to do, he would turn you over to the sheriff of the county and what you or this particular neighborhood might think would make no difference. All who feel they want to see Sam thrashed for his assault on the Crossing School will remain in the room. Those who do not may pass out and remain till the ringing of the bell."

The girls without exception rose and passed out. The boys, governed more by principle than feelings, followed the girls, and Sam and the teacher with a thoroughly good whip burned the mortgage that Sam had put on the Crossing School the year before.

Sam was asked to make no promises. He had paid the debt and without further ceremony was restored to citizenship.

Sam never caused any more trouble. It was a hard struggle. He had much to face. He had a community who took delight in teasing him whom before they had honored. But he came out of it, and while he never showed any great strength of character, he became in after years a safe citizen.

We often speak of certain diseases—that the parties did not inherit them, but rather a weakness in which these diseases found easy competition. So do we find in the moral health of the boy certain inherited tendencies which make him more easily controlled by certain forces than is some other boy. It is most important that we accept these so-called tendencies. They are innate, but like the physical they may be corrected or they may be made the basis for moral degeneration. It is not my purpose to point out the weaknesses of the boy and how they may be corrected. I shall, however, consider him as we find him and as we treat him, leaving my reader to judge if the treatment that the boy receives be not usually administered with a lack of common sense and if it be not a mighty force in determining his destiny. In my opinion one of the most ruinous forces is the erroneous prevailing opinion of what a boy is.

I am sometimes asked: " Why do you emphasize the boy? Why not the girl? Why do you not speak of the forces that control the girl, or rather the child?

Are the influences or forces that control the boy different from those controlling the girl? Or is boy nature different from girl nature, and, therefore, are different forces necessary for its control?"

Possibly those forces which tend to draw the child downward find a greater affinity in the character of the boy than in the girl. Possibly, too, the girl nature, or girl character, is more susceptible to those higher, ennobling and refining influences or forces than is boy nature or character. Be this latter speculation true or not, I would not venture to say, nor even presume to think, yet something says such is the universally accepted opinion. Now if this be an opinion that is generally accepted, foolishly maybe, is it not a mighty force? Aye, and if it be frequently expressed might not these expressions themselves prove controlling forces to the detriment of the boy?

The mischievous boy baby is often indulged by the fond parent because his little naughtinesses, while bad in themselves, are just like a boy. As the boy becomes a little older, his meannesses or Eve tendencies are looked upon with much the same leniency and passed over with the same old observation, "That is just like a boy." By and by this boy becomes a school boy. The boy who was immortalized by Whittier at once loses caste, and as truly to-day as when Isaac was a boy, is he made the burnt offering

if nothing better is at hand. He is (idiotic as it may seem) early informed that he must be good. He is at once made to feel that his very presence is offensive, and that he is not often good, and with the birds of a feather idea, he assembles himself slowly but surely, degree by degree, with that group of suppressed individuals who have learned by experience that "It's not theirs to make reply." Do you wonder if such a force bearing down upon a little fellow may not shape and determine his destiny? Charles Dickens thought these forces most potent. Let me pause long enough to say that the boys ought to build a monument to the memory of Dickens. He himself has been a mighty force among the forces that affect the boy life, especially in this regard. A few years ago it was thought that this king of prose writers would soon be unread, but there are more copies of his works being sold at this time than ever before. He stands to-day as the greatest factor in educational reform that the English speaking nations have produced.

The life of a schoolboy—it is most solemn to contemplate. I never see the boy entering school for the first time but I have a feeling that is akin to sorrow. Good, pure, innocent, trusting, confiding little cherub—so soon to step upon the stage and play the part assigned him.

Edwin Booth, the greatest American actor,

played Hamlet so long and so well, he feigned madness so admirably, that in the last years of his life attendants had to exercise the greatest diligence to prevent a real tragedy when he stabbed Polonius. The boy becomes an actor. In the dramatis personæ he is the Boy. He is no one's darling any more. He is just one of the boys. A boy is rough, he must be rough, or he is a girl-boy. He must not be dainty; that would be affectation. He must not be, he cannot be, modest; that in a boy is unpardonable. That is bashfulness. Amid all this, time passes on and the boy, while no one censures or particularly cares or blames him or holds him accountable, naturally gets a little older, a little more awkward, and considerably self-conscious, and in this period nonsensical courses of vigorous treatment are prescribed. He is subjected to lectures (morals, hygienic) upon the not doing of the identical things which the forces have compelled him to do. He is brought face to face with facts—that he is uncouth, unkind; that he is not gentle with his sister or respectful to his mother; that his father, the monument of force, is his only control, that corporal force by which he can be swayed is the only one to be resorted to to control his natural perverseness of character.

At about this time the attempt is made to unteach him all that he has been taught. But he has

played the part and it is now a reality. He is bidden to pay a thousand little compliments to his sister and to other girls and other ladies and he wonders why no one ever tells them anything nice to do for him. He wonders why girls are so much better, so much nicer than he. He knows they must be. He is always told they are. He has read about bad boys, but never in all his life has he ever heard or read of a naughty, bad girl. He has read that old story about the boy that threw the snowball against the schoolhouse door. He has heard that once popular ditty, "What are little girls made of? Sugar and spice and everything nice, that is what little girls are made of. And what are little boys made of? Tobacco and snuff and all such stuff, and that's what little boys are made of."

What fools, what fools we mortals be! What is the forecast with all these forces driving him and pushing him along? Will the father be happy in the realization of his hopes? The daughter so gentle, so loving! She stays at home. Her brother cares nothing for her now. She wonders, "What use are brothers, anyway?" And well she may after the forces have done their work. These have long since convinced him that he and she have nothing in common. That he is not a fit companion for his more refined sister, he never doubts. Why, ever since she was a little girl and he was a little boy,

their ways have been different. Pretty curls—dirty face, new shoes—chapped feet, kisses—frowns, mamma's pet—mamma's heart-ache. Thus the forces have driven them apart. At church, the sister up in the front or in the choir, the boy in the back seat or down town. Conditions, like the boy, change. New conditions enlist new forces. Sisters need escorts. The controlling forces make it proper, and the boy for the first time since he donned trousers is induced to accompany his sister to places of entertainment. Methinks the lad is secretly proud that his sister should condescend to accept such company as his, and in a very short time hereafter this boy who has been the cloud on the family horizon, the menace to society, the bugaboo to little children, becomes just like a man. Indeed, he is called a man, and he is becoming cognizant of the new responsibilities which the new forces are controlling and his destiny begins to assume calculable proportions. The new world into which he is being initiated contains forces which he is slow to understand. Eventually the mystery is solved, the darkness in which he has wandered since he was not mamma's baby vanishes and rapturously he exclaims:

"Oh, woman, lovely woman,
Nature made you to temper man.
We had been brutes without thee.
There's in you all that we expect of heaven,
Amazing brightness, truth and everlasting joy."

So it is of the forces that control the finer emotions. The boy is deprived of them until his nature has become hardened, and when it is too late he is reclaimed in form, and for the remainder of his life he is the staunch advocate of the doctrine of the immoral agency of boys, and thus is another if not a new force for the destruction of boys created. The common sense used in controlling the girl will control the boy. Pretty stories, nice toys, clean faces, nicely combed hair, nice clothes, caresses and kind words and social recognition are as powerful controlling forces in the boy as in the girl; and the forces that demoralize the boy would equally demoralize the girl if applied.

The boy if sensibly treated is as responsive as is the clay in the hand of the potter. He is particularly sensitive on one point, and I would warn all who do not understand the boy not to assume that because he is so docile you can impose on him. Punish him ever so severely and if he deserves it he is yet your faithful friend, but convincing him of your superiority by domineering and tyrannizing over him will create a passion that would destroy the oppressor and the oppressor's soul.

Boys are just as refractory as girls and like them they sometimes need heroic treatment, and like them thrive under its proper administration. Reciprocity treaties with the boys will work wonders. The

meanest boy in your town would walk a block for the privilege of lifting his hat to a lady if he believed that she appreciated the act. Benjamin Franklin was not sorry that he turned the grindstone, though his hands burned and pained; but the flame of indignation kindled by "Scud to school, you little rascal" never quite died out. The forces that control the boy are those which appeal to his heart, his pride and his sense.

I would not have it understood that I am partial to the boy nor would I have it understood that I think the girl is better treated than she should be. In fact I do not think she is too well treated. I do think that she is more sensibly and carefully treated than the boy, and it is for a more careful and sensible treatment of the boy that I would plead. The treatment that the boy is to receive in the future years is going to be a great improvement over that of the past, and I believe we shall grow a better boy than the world has ever known. Indeed, I am of the belief that notwithstanding the many frailties and shortcomings of the boy of to-day, he is the best boy, the cleanest boy, the manliest boy that ever inhabited this world. He is the result of the new education. He will be the result of common sense didactics. True, the world has a few of us left who are of that school which believes that the activity of youth is degeneracy, who believe that it

is the mission of the adult population to curb and subdue the youth of the land, who say that the boy of to-day is worse than the boy when we were boys. We who think such thoughts are honest in our thinking, but very ignorant of the past or what would be a kinder criticism, very forgetful. The boys of past generations, as their own biographies will testify, were not models from certain points of view. Irving says, "The boy whose passions are not strong enough in youth to mislead him from the path of science which his tutors and not himself have marked out for him, will probably obtain every advantage and honor that his college can bestow, but the man whose youth has been thus passed in the tranquillity of dispassionate prudence is like liquors that never ferment and consequently are always muddy." I do believe that the school of to-day and the intelligent home of to-day are taking a better and more sensible view of the matter and have about concluded that nature is deserving of a more liberal patronage than she has been accustomed to receive. And while, as one of our prominent educators has said, "When we leave the town of Boyville we may never return, yet we may be permitted to peer over its walls and see the place where we once did live, and in our peering we may recall the desires, the inability to gratify them, the disappointments, the sorrows, which were greater than

any we have encountered in later life, and in our legislating for that younger colony let us not fail to remember the very kind of legislation that would have been best suited to us when we lived there, and give it to them."

This is not dangerous advice. The youths that are ruined by over-indulgence are small in number when compared with the number of those who have been ruined by withholding the things which, innocent in themselves, would have been enjoyments in that age when such enjoyments only come, and by withholding the things which youth requires, and by forcing upon it what it does not want and often should not have. Youth is not the time to prepare for old age, so much as it is the time when the most should be gotten out of life, the time when beautiful characters should be formed, not for the future but for the present. What man or woman past middle age can think that youth is the preparation for old age? Youth is for development, for joyful, happy times, and useful times. Take care of youth and old age will take care of itself.

I plead not for a loose discipline but for a most careful, watchful supervision. The miseries of perdition are no less to be shunned than the miseries of the prodigal youth, whether boy or girl. The parent or teacher who is ignorant of the pitfalls is unfitted to lead. The parent or teacher who employs a

negative discipline or repression, depression and oppression, retards and arrests development. Such discipline, however, is most common, because it is easier to destroy than to invent; to tear down than to build up.

We must ever keep in mind that the child becomes what he likes. If we would have vice shunned we must make goodness attractive. If we would have our followers pure, we, the leaders, must be pure. We must remember the influence of environment and provide proper associations and proper entertainment. And this means much preparation and hard work.

One of the greatest troubles of humanity is overseriousness. We magnify responsibility. We know so much of the seamy side of life and so little of the seamless side. We see nothing but seams. We forget to look on the other side. We see so much of the bad and so little of the good. With young men and women there is much of the good and little of the bad. In this twentieth century we have a young woman who is the greatest creation, with one exception, that ever came from the hand of God, and that exception is the twentieth century young man. He is great in spite of the conditions. I say this without expecting favor from the young men, but for the influence it may have on those who think the boy is by nature bad. I make these statements to

my readers, hoping to awaken feelings of responsibility. I have had many years' experience with boys. Before I began my work as a teacher I made this resolution: Every boy who comes under my care will receive as much care as will the girl. If he is deserving commendation he will always get it. No boy will ever receive any but the kindest treatment, even though he be awkward, overgrown and green. He may swear and do a thousand uncomplimentary things, but I'll treat him fair and square. I'll be honest with him, I'll bend him but never break him. If he breaks confidence with me I'll wipe off the slate and begin anew—open a new account. I'll always remember the lad I once was. I'll give him the love I used to want and did not get. I'll try to forget all the bad he does and try to remember all the good, and I'll always try to remember that there is more good in a bad boy than there is in a good man.

After over twenty-five years of acting upon these resolves I stand ready to approve of them. Such a policy will make honorable men out of any type. It will win in the slums of the great city as it will win upon the beautiful prairies.

CHAPTER XII

A Teacher's Responsibility as Seen by A Board Member

In every community there are men who bear good names but do not deserve them. They are loud in their professions of goodness, but at heart they are bad.

In every community with which the writer is familiar there is at least one man who is better than he is given credit for being. These men have peculiar notions of letting their light shine. They abhor anything that has the faintest of show in it. They are of that class of men who pray in secret, but in the presence of their fellowmen seem wholly indifferent to matters spiritual.

When they subscribe to public enterprises, to the support of the church or give to charity, they give grudgingly, not because they begrudge the beneficiaries the money, but because they cannot stand the publicity that it gives them.

Such a man was William Constad. To his neighbors he had the reputation of being irreligious, simply because he did not enter into the religious work as did others.

When the question was put, as it often was,

"How many of you feel sure of heaven?" William Constad remained seated. When the question was asked, as it sometimes was, "How many hope that they will be saved?" William Constad remained seated. He was non-committal. When the subscription paper was passed for the support of the church, he was not the lowest on the list, but he was far from being the highest.

Before I learned to know him well I expressed myself to Father Rose as being surprised at his tight-fistedness. But afterwards I had no such criticism. In confidence I learned much that the public knew nothing about. I learned that but for Constad the church at that place would have very slim support.

In December, soon after the schoolhouse had been repaired, the weather turned bitterly cold, and one day when the storm was extremely bad there was a knock on the schoolhouse door. It was Constad. He called me outside and said: "I want to talk with you about a few of the poor children in the school. We have two or three families that are not clothed for this kind of weather. Now, I want to help them but I can't very well afford to do so. There are so many who just bleed a fellow if they suspect he has a heart; and if it is known that one will help, many who do not need assistance try to get it. You are in a position to do such work in-

telligently and I want you to do it, and I'll furnish the money. All the money that is needed to make all the children properly clothed you can have, and I give it on one condition only, which is, that the people whom you supply shall not know me in the matter."

Within a week the three families mentioned in an early chapter of this book were supplied with good comfortable clothing.

On the Sunday following it was a pleasure and a pretty sight to see these children come to church clothed in good warm clothing.

It is not difficult to analyze the feelings of the man who was responsible for a dozen being sufficiently clothed to attend church, and he had the satisfaction of knowing that they felt under no obligation to him. One must be endowed with more than ordinary sense to know that for one to help his neighbor who is in deep financial distress, one must either give this help secretly or give it as a pleasure to himself, if he would retain that neighbor's good will.

The sting of ingratitude is most painful, but there is nothing more common. The individual who has become a beneficiary to the extent that he considers his very existence is due to another's assistance experiences feelings of revolt that not infrequently resolve into hate.

In doing good deeds the wise man will not let his right hand know what his left hand does. This principle has its application to many lines of endeavor—to the work of the teacher and the preacher, as well as to the work of the philanthropist. Many, many men have found to their bitter disappointment that their good deeds were unappreciated—they consider the world ungrateful.

The doctor laments the fact that gratitude does not outlive the disease. The landlord remembers the ingratitude of his tenant whom he provided with the necessities of life till he could get a crop; the politician remembers the many men in office that are there through his endeavors, but since then, they know him not. The giver of alms often claims as his reward the hatred of those to whom he has ministered.

To all such it may profitably be said, " When thou visiteth the sick, or when thou providest the tenant with groceries, or giveth thine alms to the poor, or scratchest thy ticket in the interests of a friend, forget it most speedily; otherwise ye have no reward."

Of all of Constad's good works his greatest was along the lines that would be helpful to boys. He never saw a book on pedagogy, but he had certain ideas that were sound. He believed in providing pleasures for them rather than in depriving them of pleasures. He believed in opening his own house

to his children's friends, rather than have his own children go to places where their amusements were questionable. He believed that it was better to have plenty of social entertainment in the Crossing neighborhood than to suppress it as much as possible and force the young people to seek it in distant places. He believed that when the boys of his neighborhood gave as a reason for Sunday baseball, that the gate receipts were better on that day, and that they had to have gate receipts in order to get their supplies, it was up to him to subsidize that ball team, thereby removing the necessity (as the boys considered it) for Sunday violation.

He believed that a young man who committed a wrong should be forgiven and given at least one more chance. His excuse for forgiving the young man who forged his name to a check, and for allowing him to work for him to pay back the money he had thus unlawfully obtained and squandered, was that he himself owed his success in life to a mere accident. Here is the story in his own words.

"I was a very dishonest young man. Not only was I crooked in my dealings but I actually took things that did not belong to me. My father was a wealthy and a very careless man. He loved his children and believed in them. He felt it was wrong to watch them. Whatever they told him, he never questioned. He kept money in the house and it

was where the children could get to it, unrestrained. But he never believed that he had a child who would take a cent without accounting for it. I became an exception. First, pennies, then dimes, and later a bill. I went to bed early every night—that was what my father thought. We lived in a city then. I went up to my room, but within a few minutes I was with the worst boys and in most questionable places, and all this time I was my father's pride. By mere accident my father discovered that I had been derelict in a small matter, and when once his confidence was shaken he began a most searching inquisition. This inquisition discovered to him that his son was leading a dissipated life and that he was both a liar and a thief.

"At once he began to make restitution for the things wherein he had been remiss. He accepted the situation as he found it, and assumed full responsibility for it all. He had indulged in unpardonable credulity. Temptations to do wrong and unlimited opportunity after yielding to temptations to escape detection had been afforded his children. Yes sir, he had hidden nothing from his children up to this time, nor did he begin it there. He told me in quiet tones that I was a liar; that I had betrayed his confidence; that I was a thief, and had stolen from one who had always meant to be very kind to me. It

was most humiliating to have him say all this, and to have him conclude by saying 'It is all my fault. Poor boy! All these years I have been making money, and felt I was living for you, but I have neglected you, and have placed before you temptations that were too strong for you. The only question now, my son, is: "Can we make it all right again?"'

"Then began our new life.

"He exacted but one promise of me, and gave me strictly to understand that it was a promise never to be broken. That promise was that I would never tell him an untruth. After making him that promise, he said, 'If you do a wrong and I question you about it, tell me the whole truth and we will fix it all up and try to do better afterwards, but if you tell me a lie, it may cause me never to trust you again.' In addition to exacting the promise, the drawer containing the money was locked. Never again would he allow money of even a very small denomination to lie around, where it might be picked up by little children or by the servants.

"His next step was to form a closer association with his family, and our home was opened to our friends. True, it had not, before this, been denied them, but there had been no effort made to have them there.

"I was privileged and urged thereafter to have my friends come to our home, and although I did not have to be directed in my choice of friends, I found myself desiring a different friendship from that which I had been forming in the places of vice.

"When I think of my narrow escape," he continued, "I shudder to think of what might have been the consequences had it not been for the timely detection, and if, then, I had had an austere and unforgiving father. I claim no credit for my being an honest citizen, and a man whose business integrity is undoubted, and I wonder if to-day, were I a convict in some state prison, which, undoubtedly but for the accident, I would be, would I assume full responsibility for a blasted life? I believe I would not. I would have been the result of an environment as truly as I am the result of an environment."

In giving me this bit of his personal history, he offered the following as his reason:

"I give you this personal experience because you are a teacher and will have great opportunities for doing much for the boys and girls. You will also have great opportunities for committing immeasurable injury.

"Morally, teachers are an exceptional people. I do not except the ministry, when I say they have no superiors. I have studied teachers all my life.

I knew many of them before I came West, and I know they are a superior class of people. They are usually the very best students that the schools produce. They come, generally speaking, from the best homes. Consequently we have little to fear concerning their morals, but there is one grave danger, and that is that such people are not wise to the ways of the world. Like my father, they are too much inclined to undue credulity, and this as I have shown may lead to bad results.

"Sometimes we find a teacher who looks lightly upon wrongdoing; that is unusual, but the former fault is quite a common one. Sometimes that fault is due to downright stupidity, but most often to an unnatural and unwarranted confidence.

"The teacher who is a safe proposition to consider in the matter of directing young people must be ever on the alert. He need not, and if sane he will not, give the young under his care to feel that they are under surveillance, but it is more important that he know just what is being done than it is for the merchant to know what his employees are doing.

"You teachers frequently grow rather sentimental, and give for your opinions concerning such matter as I am discussing doctrines which if practised by the business world would overcrowd

our penitentiaries in a very short time. This does not mean that people are dishonest, but it does mean that people are weak, and that there is such a thing as making it easy to do wrong. The strict and careful auditing of the accounts of the public official makes for honest service. Post office inspectors, bank inspectors, combination locks and cash registers are not reflections upon man's integrity. They all help make an honest citizenship. The teacher who thoughtlessly or wilfully permits deception, cheating, or lying, or makes it possible through his mismanagement for the wrongs to happen, is as unfit for the position which he occupies as is the trustee of public funds when thoughtlessly or wilfully he is derelict in his service. And the results will be more disastrous in the case of the teacher."

So spoke the man who never spoke unkindly of his neighbors. He had had an experience that made him have charity for his fellowmen. He was timid when it came to professing his virtues, but bold in defending the reputation of another.

It seems to be a truth, and yet it is not always possible of verification, that no one can really sympathize with the unfortunate, the sick, the poor or the morally delinquent unless it in some way touches a real experience either in his life or in the life of one near and dear to him.

The teacher who has drunk deeply from sorrow's cup, and is rich in experience that has left him not hardened and embittered against the world, but softened and sweetened with a charity that looks for goodness in all men and in all women, and who sees evil as the inevitable result of vicious environmental conditions, has a preparation for a life work that has for its accomplishment the building of a citizenship based upon the love of man for man.

CHAPTER XIII

Christmas Vacation

The Crossing School was the largest school in the county.

After the corn was gathered the larger boys, young men grown, came in for a few months. If the spring was backward they remained in till the middle of March, but February brings sunshiny days some years, and farming, such as sowing oats, cutting stalks, cutting hedge, making fence and breaking colts begins from two to three weeks earlier. Some years there is little sunshine during the month of February, and March may be a very disagreeable month, with its rains, snows, sleets and winds. But March is not a time of year when farmers can regard the weather. At that time of year there are hundreds of things to be done. If the farmer is a man who owns his farm, he has horses, cattle and hogs (and this is the season for colts, calves and pigs), and these must all be protected against the weather. If the farmer does not own his farm, March is his moving time. These various activities call for the able-bodied young men, and by the middle of April they will be needed if ever at all.

It is certainly ideal to have these young men in

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till the close of the school year, but there are grave economic questions that must be considered, and they will be considered.

Farming is a business that must be done at certain periods or not at all. Farming is a business that will permit of no neglect. There are lines of public service that seem to grow without much activity on the part of those who reap the benefits, but there is a maxim which is old but true, that "He who by the plow would thrive, must either hold the plow or drive."

In all the efforts to give rural people the "social uplift" none has solved the labor problems. Oats and spring wheat must be sowed in season. Alfalfa must be sowed in dry countries in the spring, and the fall won't do. Winter wheat must be sowed in the fall. Wheat and oats must be cut when ripe, corn must be husked when matured, colts, calves and pigs must be cared for when they are little and until they are ready for the market, and no amount of theorizing will make it different. Farmers should do a thousand things they do not do. They should coöperate for buying and selling. They should interest themselves in political and social affairs, establish rural community centres, resurrect the decadent rural church; but after it is all said there still exists that demand on the farmer's time that the bravest of them dare not but honor.

There are those who have not had farm experience who can solve these questions, but they do not get the same answers that the farmer gets. Those without farm experience see the improved machinery in the city implement house, and at once pronounce farming a sedentary occupation and manual labor a lost art. No longer does the farmer follow a plow or harrow all day, walking in run-over shoes. No longer does he need to know how to make a double-band to bind his wheat while the reflected sun burns till he wishes he might die, regardless of his preparation. He just rides all day long. Plowing or reaping, mowing or raking, he rides. To the man whose nearest approach to the soil is the book advertising farm machinery, farming is an occupation of riding and waiting.

To the economist there is no business that is more exacting of its investors than farming. No more serious and important topic can engage the attention of the student. The farmer is manager, capitalist and laborer, and if he succeeds he must perform three important functions: to decide questions of investment; to oversee the work and help to perform it; to sell the produce of the farm. In addition to these important functions he must study crop production, crop rotation, conservation of soil fertility and animal husbandry. He must be a mechanic. He must be as capable of changing his

matured plans on a moment's notice as is the general on the battlefield. With all these qualifications, is it any wonder that rural districts are the seed-beds from which cities are stocked?

After all is said, farming requires hard work, and it requires long hours. The man in the city who gets to his business at eight o'clock has no occasion to rise at four or even five; but with the farmer it is different. For many good reasons cows should be milked early, and for just as good reasons they cannot be milked early in the afternoon. The care of live stock requires attention early in the morning and attention at the close of the day.

To those who have never seen beautiful sunrises, while driving cows from the dewy meadows to be milked, the labors of the farm as just described will be unattractive, but those who have seen all sides of life have a longing and a yearning for the farm which through some unfortunate circumstance they left.

This leaving the farm may have been due to ill health, loss of capital, or to a desire to see the city; or to obtain more liberal income or for more agreeable social life, or for intellectual and æsthetic enjoyment. To whatever it is due, there remains in the minds of such people a fond memory of the days when they lived there, of the green pastures, the swimming hole, the red-haw tree, the days when the

creeks overflowed their banks and it was too wet to work in the fields; of the seasons that were not all alike; of snow in the winter that meant sleigh rides and sled rides; bells and belles; coasting and skating; spelling schools and singing schools; literary societies, protracted meetings and parties. Those who have been the rounds and have seen it all will look back to the days of stone bruises, and feet that were so badly chapped that one would almost rather stay up all night than wash them, and wish it all might be lived over again.

President McKinley on his last western tour arose from his Pullman berth just after daylight on an early September morning. The train had for some reason stopped in the open country. He saw a sight that caused him to rush to his sleeping cabinet officers who accompanied him and call them to come to the rear platform. The sight was but of two little boys who had come out barefooted to milk cows. They had driven the cows from the warm spots on which they had been sleeping and had appropriated these places for warming their feet. President McKinley said: "Gentlemen, that sight recalls the happiest days of my life"; and each cabinet officer in turn expressed a like sentiment, and remembered having warmed his feet in that same way. America's great statesmen then gave

three cheers in the early morning for the little boys in Iowa who reminded them of their happiest days.

There are a few months in the winter when business on the farm is less rushing than during other times, but work begins early in the spring and extends late into the fall, even up to December.

The boys in the Crossing neighborhood were all in school by the beginning of the fourth month, but in three weeks from that time school was dismissed for the winter vacation. Those who needed school most and who had worked the hardest to get it were confronted with a two weeks' vacation just about the time they had settled down to their studies. With the certainty that they must quit school early in the spring this vacation seemed, so far as this belated group was concerned, entirely out of place. However, it was useless to argue that a week was sufficiently long, or that there should be no vacation for those who were late in entering. My offer to give special work for them was looked upon with disfavor. They always had broken into the work by this vacation and regardless of the pressing need they must continue to break into it. Another bad feature of the work was the total absence of any gradation of the work that granted those who entered late any particular benefit. They dropped into the same classes that they had been in the year

before and went over practically the same ground. Consequently by the time I had aroused an interest there arose outside distractions which far exceeded in attractiveness anything I had to offer.

The generally accepted statement that the pupils of the rural schools have not so many distracting influences as the pupil of the town schools was not borne out by my experience in the Constad School. They had the same social cravings, and while the opportunities for gratification were not so plentiful, their reaction to the few was complete and the time involved was greater.

The month of November and half of December was taken up with protracted meeting and with its close the adjacent communities began their meetings, and the young people's evenings were more occupied than ever.

The Christmas time was a cessation of matters religious and matters educational. Christmas trees and parties were planned on extensive scales. Christmas trees on Christmas eve and Christmas night, New Year's trees on New Year's eve and New Year's night gave each community a chance to celebrate. These were their midwinter festivals. We gave our Christmas tree in the afternoon and by so doing solved the problem of how to have one more celebration in that part of the country.

Those who have attended the city tree and listened to the little children speak their little Christmas pieces and sing their pretty little songs and at the close of those exercises have seen each get his Christmas gift of gumdrops and cheap candy and two peanuts and some more cheap candy all done up in a cornucopia or mosquito bar netting may have had a fairly good time, but such a celebration is very simple as compared with the Constad Crossing "tree."

In the first place we built a stage the full width of the building. In the second place we had a real evergreen tree at the right end of the stage. In the third place we had a curtain that completely hid from view both stage and tree. In the fourth place, from the time the curtain was hung till it was pushed aside to expose to view the Christmas tree with its variegated colors, its dolls and drums for the little ones, gloves, mittens and books for the big ones—plush albums for the "best ones," and neck comforters of yellow and red yarns, 18 inches wide and 8 feet long, made by the "best one" for the "best one," all was excitement and expectation.

Nearly all Christmas trees are wonderful and this differed only in being very wonderful. It would be useless to describe it or to even begin to tell what all it held First came the program, and it was not

materially different from all programs except that it lasted longer. It opened with a real Christmas anthem, which was followed by some "speaking." This was rudely interrupted by one of the men who insisted on treating the audience to apples. This required two bushels, but he was supplied. Then the program started, but only to be interrupted by another who passed through the crowd with peanuts. It was all quite informal, and everyone was having a good time. The calling off of the presents was the real event of the evening. And of all the presents! Some discovered their own old clothes done up in neat bundles. One man who had augmented an argument with a hatchet drew down six hatchets; another who had the reputation of rustling cattle got a calf's tail, and every boy that had been jilted was presented with a little mitten; everybody got something and usually many things. The teacher was not forgotten; indeed, his present was kept till the last. His present was Shakespeare's Complete Works.

If there is one thing that is more difficult than all other things, it is for a teacher to pretend that he does not know what's being done when sixty or seventy pupils are taking up a collection to buy him a present. The next most difficult thing is to show the proper appreciation.

To give a present is difficult, but to receive one is a torture. It was with much pleasure, however, that I received this particular present. I was particularly fond of Shakespeare. I owed my love for this great work to no teacher. In fact I liked it in spite of the efforts my teachers had made to make me dislike it. I do not mean that they intended that I should dislike Shakespeare, but their methods of attack were such that dislike was the usual result that they secured. With my Shakespeare as with Dickens or Scott or Irving, I found happy, profitable hours. I read "Macbeth," "Hamlet," "As You Like It," just as I read anything that I like. I did not stop to dissect and parse every line, but I read them enjoying them and always wanted to read more. When I had the opportunity some years later to attend the Shakespearean plays by the great actors Booth and Barrett, I attended for seven successive evenings, and these were the greatest evenings of my life. I may not have learned the great lessons of this greatest English dramatist as some great teachers would present them, but what I did get pleased me, and the effect upon my life was good. The works of Shakespeare presented me by my rural school are my most loved and most worn books.

As I mention in a subsequent chapter, I had been telling these stories to my school. I had made

use of "Hamlet," "King Lear," "The Comedy of Errors," and "The Taming of the Shrew," and others for my morning exercises, and while I did not like presents, my readers will appreciate the satisfaction that it was to me to know that these boys and girls, after discussing what they might get me, decided upon what *they* liked best, feeling it was what would most please me.

That "Christmas tree" was one joyous occasion. It is and was the one great event of the year—old scores were there settled, forgiven or forgotten.

Family names are never more prominent or mothers' joys are never so nearly complete as when their daughters' names are being "called." For is this not unmistakable evidence of popularity? The mother who would not augment this evidence by adding to the list of presents is an unnatural mother, too. They all condemn the practice, but, God bless them! they all indulge in it, and the fact that they *do* and the fact that they *will* makes life worth living.

There is no time of the year more precious than Christmas to those who are living right, to those who love and deserve to be loved.

The dear Christmas pieces of Field and Riley! How they stir our hearts and bring back those happy, happy memories!

Christmas! Christmas when the roads are drifted, making Santa's visit a physical impossibility. But the real Santa came and left unmistakable evidence of his individuality—cookies and candy, homemade, and then we knew. Happy, happy memories!

As I left for home to take my two weeks' vacation it was with a feeling of love for the people who were giving me a greater insight into life and my responsibilities to society.

CHAPTER XIV

Rural Community Interest

School opened after the vacation with a very full enrollment. Every seat was occupied and the pupils seemed anxious to get to their studies. This was especially true of the older boys who had but a few weeks to attend. It is during these few weeks that the rural school is either at its best or worst. It is during these weeks that the teacher must lead the strenuous life.

On the first morning a young man knocked at the schoolhouse door and I bade him enter and take a seat in the visitor's chair. As was the custom I handed him a book in order that he might observe the work of the recitation which was in progress. He remained until the morning recess, at which time we visited together, and during our conversation he informed me that he was thinking of going to school.

He was twenty-six years old, and was considered one of the good farmers of that neighborhood, and it was only after a considerable length of time that I understood that it was his intention to come to school to me. He said, "I am over 21 years of age but the board has given me permission to attend if you have no objections. I took a load of hogs to

market yesterday, and do you know I never was so embarrassed in all my life. I felt sure they had made some mistake in figuring up what they came to, and I had to ask a man around town to go over the figures for me. I could see a look of disdain come over his face, almost a look of pity, and do you know, I could buy that fellow several times, and yet I had to ask him to figure up what a load of my hogs should come to. As I drove home I thought over this matter and the more I thought, the more I blamed myself and the more ashamed I became of my ignorance, and before I had reached home I resolved that before I raised another crop or fed another hog I would be able to do my own figuring. If you will stand by me you will be the only person whom I shall ever ask to show me how to figure hogs or corn or interest."

He pulled from under his coat a tattered, "dog-eared" old Ray's Third Part of Arithmetic. I saw he was in earnest and immediately set about finding out what he had done so that I might have him begin work at once. He knew the multiplication table up to the fives and had had a little work in short division, but long division never had been mastered, and he told me that long division was the subject that drove him out of school years ago. My first assignment to him was the multiplication table beginning with the sixes. As soon as I had made this assignment he inquired where he might sit. I gave him all

I had to offer, the visitor's chair and the teacher's desk. At noon I asked him if he was going to dinner. He said, " No, I am not hungry." At one o'clock he was yet in his seat working on that multiplication table. Through the long afternoon it seemed that his eyes were never taken from the book; sometimes they were closed as if in meditation, but he worked continuously. After four o'clock when the children were all gone I went to him and asked him how he was getting along. He handed me the book, which I hardly needed, and proceeded to say the multiplication table beginning with the sixes. He went on through to twelve times twelve without a mistake. I tried him on the seven times eight, and the nine times seven, and the six times seven, and the eight times nine, but he had them all. Before going home I gave him some assistance with short division, and to my surprise when I was ready to leave the school building, he said he would not go for awhile yet. In the morning at eight o'clock when I arrived at the school I found a good fire and young Mr. Turner was in his seat working on short division, which he said he had almost finished. He continued his work throughout the remainder of the term, working just as hard in school as he would have worked on the farm. He studied evenings after the close of the term, and before the close of the school year had mastered Ray's Third Part of Arithmetic.

This interest which he manifested was no other than an objective one. He wanted arithmetic not for itself, but for what he might do with it. He had arrived at an age when he realized how this subject functioned with the business of his every-day life. Regardless of which interest is the higher, the objective or the subjective, we must agree that the objective is the determining factor in the education of most people, and the one most lacking in our rural schools.

In the light of past experience I see many lost opportunities to that school. There were many anxious for an education such as was offered, but they could not get it. The time of the teacher was too full to give the needed attention; while it was possible for a student as mature as Mr. Turner to do good work, it was not possible for those of immature years.

There are two types of school that are far from efficient, the one in which the teacher helps too much and the one in which he does not help enough. Mine was of the latter type. I had pupils who walked long distances and received but little of my time. With the right kind of school, which I attempt to discuss in a subsequent chapter entitled "Suggested Improvements," the country can be made the ideal place in which to live.

To bring clearly before the reader's mind my estimate of some of the advantages and disadvan-

tages of both rural and city life the following recital of two incidents, one of rural life and one of city life, is given:

At the Crossing there were genuine community interests. There were few people who had not a genuine interest in the community, and there were none so poor or so unimportant as to be without friends. There were none who were very wealthy, but nearly all had plenty, and those who had not, never knew what real want meant.

In February of this year the cold weather was at its worst. For three months the ground had been covered with snow, and with the coming of the last month of winter came a storm that swept all the states of the Middle West. This blizzard began on the evening of the third day of the month and by the next morning it was almost impossible to find one's way through the heavy falling snow. At 9 o'clock but few of the pupils had arrived, but they continued to come cold and wet till altogether there were about thirty present.

The task of caring for pupils with such accommodations as were at hand is no easy one, and one which is attended with great responsibility. Many who read this book will read this chapter with little interest. It is entirely without their experience. Those who have grown up within a few blocks of the school building and are accustomed to the walks free from

mud and snow, regardless of the weather, cannot appreciate the labor and danger involved in a two mile walk through deep snow drifts. Those who are accustomed to school buildings heated with hot air or steam, to wardrobes where one may go to adjust clothing, to rest rooms equipped with couches and easy chairs, where pupils who are indisposed may rest and care for themselves, will not be able to appreciate the dangers and discomfort involved in attending a rural school under conditions of twenty-five years ago or even at the present time.

The modern school building is the positive and definite measure of a community's awareness of parental responsibility and obligation.

In considering the rural school you must not expect to find that most important person in a school system—the janitor. (The teacher is janitor, and parent and nurse.) He (or she) must be on hand early on cold mornings to start the fire, sweep the drifts of snow from the porch, shovel walks to the woodpile or coal house, pump (if there be one) and to the outhouses which upon such mornings are likely to be drifted full of snow. It is the duty of the teacher not to make everything comfortable, but to make, so far as possible, things less miserable. A comparison of the snow drifted outhouse with its ice-coated benches and absolute absence of any modern convenience with the inside toilets of a

modern building exposes to the public a condition which we would improve without casting reflection upon those who suffer in order that the tax levy be kept down; who suffer because "it has always been so."

On this particular morning everyone who came was soaked from the deep snow which he or she had been forced to wade. In years since, when I have witnessed the approaches to our colleges and universities cleared of snow with horse-drawn scrapers, my mind goes back and my heart goes out to the child of tender years who is breaking her own path over storm-swept hills to the little schoolhouse for which she is bound, and involuntarily I am asking "How long, how long will this injustice be continued?" Among my pupils on this morning was Rachel, she after whom Mother Rose had inquired on the first day; she who had the care of four younger brothers and sisters. Her mother had died at a time when Rachel most needed her. This girl was there. She had never missed a day. She was dreadfully in earnest. It was her ambition to become a teacher in order that she might do more for her brothers and sisters.

It was plain to me, inexperienced and young as I was, that she should not have come to school. It it unnecessary that I enter into a discussion of her trouble, a trouble of which she herself was probably

ignorant. Here was a condition, and here is a condition—a young girl just entering upon womanhood compelled to suffer an exposure that probably has for its toll the lives or the ruined health of thousands.

In loco parentis! No mother or father is alone capable of properly bringing up a family; both are necessary. No woman or man is capable of properly managing a mixed school and there should be legislation prohibiting it.

Here is a girl needing a woman's care. She sits cold and neglected, and but for the neighborhood mother, Mother Rose, she would have died uncared for.

Teachers must realize their responsibility. School requires an exercise of common sense on the part of the teacher, and the teacher who cannot rise to the occasion is a danger to the public welfare.

As soon as possible I sent a boy with a note to my boarding place. The note stated the need that Rachel had of a woman's care, and within half an hour she was gently led to the big sled that was driven by Father Rose.

It is not my purpose to make this account unduly tragic. Many of my readers have had an experience like that which came to me and well know an isolated case is not being cited. Within two days, at the home of Father and Mother Rose Rachel lay dead, and in her death four children lost a second

mother, a tragedy due to pernicious methods of taxation.

Four miles away was the cemetery where the Crossing people buried their dead. The funeral procession was much different from the ordinary. A large sled to which were hitched four horses was the only vehicle. On horseback preceding the sled rode six young men breaking the road as well as they could. Before leaving the house Father Rose spoke to the few neighbors gathered, offered a prayer and delegated to their teacher the conduct of the services at the grave. There was no minister in the neighborhood at that time and from this duty and obligation the teacher did not shrink, although he felt most keenly his unfitness. At this funeral there was no blanket of roses to hide the excavations of the grave; there was no "profusion of flowers." Neither were there hired grave-diggers, hired pallbearers nor hearse; but there was real mourning, real affection for those who were left behind, for the children twice left motherless, and the father whose life was overrunning with disappointment and bitterness. There was love and sympathy for them all. Love and sympathy ending not in words, but in *homes* for each motherless child.

Orphans' homes and poorhouses are not recruited from rural communities. "The pauper whom nobody owns" has no application to the world in which

the golden rule is the basis of the moral code, and yet how often have we heard it said: "I hate the country, for it is here where things small are weighed, discussed and dissected. It is here where gossip and slander thrive best. It is here where everyone knows all about his neighbor's affairs."

This is a real rural condition and it is one not common to the city. In no way can it be attributed to a difference in the character of the two, the ruralite and the urbanite.

Because of the knowledge that rural people have of each other there is a community interest. The gossip alluded to is but one of the results that come from this intimate acquaintance. It is here as nowhere else that we find people bound together with a common experience.

Here the success of one in no way impedes the progress of a neighbor. They are not competitors, but co-workers. They have common interests, success depending upon their labor and the weather. A drought means hard times for all, and plentiful, timely rains mean good times for all. When markets are juggled all are affected in the same way. When the market prices of farm products are low and everything that the farmer buys is high, their grievance is common, and thereby they are bound more closely together.

A close analysis of the status of rural social

relations will show that in spite of alleged bickerings, nowhere is there truer regard for one's fellowman, nowhere such real friendship, a friendship that would divide another's sorrow sooner than share his happiness, than among the rural people. Here, as nowhere else, man is not himself alone, but an integral part of a relationship that is based upon trials and triumphs, disappointments and happy attainments common to the individuals of the group.

The criticism offered on rural society cannot be made upon urban society. In the latter is not to be found the friendly or unfriendly interest, but the cold, cruel, selfish independence and unconcern. This criticism is not made for the purpose of differentiating between the rural and urban people. Fundamentally there is no difference.

The urbanite, too, has reacted to his particular environment—diversity of interests, the sharp business competition, the absence of personal interest, the absolute adherence to business principles, credit extended to none but those of sound financial standing except in cases of prominent people. Everyone is too engrossed with his own affairs, too intent upon struggling for existence, too jealous of the position he has already gained, to weigh matters either small or large—or to gossip or slander. He neither loves nor hates—he knows but few, and these few are nothing to him nor is he anything to them.

In a former chapter I alluded to the fact that the criminal, the pauper, the unfortunate, drift to the city. It is there among the multitude who lack not only community interest but human interest that one may abide safe from molestation except from the officers whose business it is to inspect life's seamy side and probe the sores of suffering, fallen people.

Why the social outcast must leave the rural community, why he must go to the city, is understandable; but why many a moral, upright man who loves his neighbor and wishes to be loved in return, who desires that his children shall grow up respected and respecting, free from a business world that counts man but as a part of a machine and discards him without consideration when it is in the interests of big business to scrap the machine, must go to the city, is not so easily understood.

Sociologists attribute the emigration of the rural young men and women of talent and capacity to the unattractiveness of farm life, and to the lack of opportunities for a liberal material income on the farm, and to the agreeable social life and the intellectual and æsthetic enjoyment in the city.

Doubtless these are among the incentives, but the greatest of all reasons is the lack of knowledge of city life. Many of these advantages are available to the wealthy, but to those in moderate circumstances and those who must work for a living, these incen-

tives are false, as thousands who have been led by them could testify.

The young man raised in the country and accustomed to the best society that his community affords finds entrance into as good society in the city almost impossible unless he has money or influential friends. In the country he has been a factor in society, but in the city he finds that he is not.

Having been accustomed to society he will have it, and eventually he accepts what is attainable, which is very often bad, and then a downward career is begun.

Statistics give much on the girls who are lost through vice every year; but if figures were obtainable the loss of character of young men who go to the city expecting liberal income, agreeable social life and intellectual, æsthetic enjoyment would be stupendous. Occasionally one makes his mark, but where one succeeds scores fail and go down in a misery of degradation and sin unknown to rural life.

We have much written on "Back to the Farm," but much of it deals with the beauties of rural life written by those who know it by a few days' outing or an occasional visit to some rural home.

As I have tried to show, all is not pleasure and ease on the farm. We should not expect to find such a place in this world where the majority of men work for their daily bread. But there is more pleasure,

more leisure time, more opportunity for social enjoyment, more opportunity for reading, for culture, for living a life in the open country than in the crowded city. For a day the sights of a city are alluring, but living in a city and having a job in a city, or being out of a job in a city, are as different from "seeing the city" for a day as plowing stump ground is different from visiting a summer resort.

There are many excursions to the city; conventions of many kinds are held there and many places of amusement are there. To the casual observer it would seem that the city is one great whirl of pleasure. The beautiful streets, boulevards and parks, the large department stores and the theatres all look very attractive when he compares them with rural roads, the woods, the small stores and the opera house. But all these mean but little to the young man and young woman who work six or seven days in the week, usually for wages that barely carry them over from one pay day to the next. If the rural young man could study the throngs that crowd the thousands of cars in a city like Chicago between 5 A.M. and 8 A.M., and 5:30 P.M. and 7 P.M., he would be so impressed with the incorrectness of his notion of city life that he would yearn for the green fields, the horses and cattle, and for a people whose lives were being lived in freedom, away from the oppressing cares that kill the body and dwarf the soul.

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Admitting all that has been said against rural life is true (but it is not), it is the only life that is suited to the moderately well-to-do and to the respectable poor. The wealthy can procure comforts in the city in spite of adverse conditions—they can control their environment, and the disrespectable poor can live less miserably in the city than elswhere.

The great difficulty in arriving at proper conclusions is that we know so little of the life that the other man leads. We see always its best side.

No place is the teacher more appreciated than in the rural schools. He has troubles, and they are not imaginary ones, either, but it is there that he gets credit for what he does.

In a city of over 10,000 no teacher is known by many of the parents of his pupils. He becomes a part of a great machine and he does his particular work and there his feeling or responsibility ends.

The teacher of the rural school who is prepared for his work has great opportunity for doing good. If he craves appreciation of his work, if he desires to live long in the memory of his people, he can find no place that excels the rural school. The first preparation for the rural teacher must be a love and a sympathy for rural life.

A young man raised in a small town secures a rural school. The lonesomeness of it all nearly kills him. He longs for his home, but he cannot stay

there because he must have employment. He hears of the opportunities for young men in the Golden West, and with credentials from his home bankers, his minister and his high school principal, and with a heart full of hope and trunk and grips packed with good clothes by a loving, trusting mother, he seeks his fortune in a far-off city. Before leaving home he secures a position which pays more money than his school paid him, and in this position he confidently expects prosperity and happiness, and in his anticipation of an escape from a life of lonesomeness into one of business and social opportunity he is very happy.

No larger or more delightful experience can come to the young man than that which comes in a trip across the beautiful western plains and up among and over the Rockies and down to the Pacific Coast. The world has nothing greater to offer. He who has seen the beauty and the grandeur of plains, mountains, gorges, canyons and cataracts and experienced the thrills of the wonderful and dangerous precipices over whose rim the train seems to lean as it rushes upward or downward and onward, finds all later experiences to suffer by comparison. The joy of all these thrills and experiences is his, and he is in the city of the Golden West!

His work does not begin for ten days and in that time he makes the acquaintance of his first city. He

writes home of the beautiful bay connected with the Pacific Ocean by Golden Gate, a passage four miles long and a mile wide; of Golden Gate Park with its thousand acres, with over 300 acres of closely shaved sward, green and attractive the whole year round, and a greater area planted with semi-tropical shrubs and trees!

During his ten days he visits the many libraries, the six million dollar city hall which was twenty-five years in building, the beautiful churches, the great hospitals! His passion for nature is being gratified —the mountains round about, the cliffs, the flowing and ebbing of the tides—all so interesting, so wonderful. As he walks about the piers he sees steamships from every port of the world and learns that the bay constitutes one of the finest harbors in the world; that from here extend many ship lines to China, Japan, Australia, Mexico, Central and South America, the Hawaiian and Philippine Islands—all so interesting, so wonderful, so educative!

The ten days' respite expires and the work begins. It is a job that knows no week-end. The city that never records any month a higher mean temperature than 65° nor a lower mean temperature than 46° becomes his permanent abode at the beginning of the rainy season. In the land of semi-tropical plants he almost freezes and is never warm. He is now a part of a great steamship company, a very small

part, with great responsibilities and (compared with his expense) a very low salary. The salary that looked so attractive must be carefully spent or it will not do him from one pay day to the next and thoughts of sickness or a loss of position enter his mind for the first time. No longer is he taking his meals at one of the fine hotels where he stopped upon his arrival. Indeed, where he can get a wholesome meal at a price not prohibitive is no small part of his daily concern. He is bonded, and well he may be, for every day he has opportunities for making mistakes that would cost his company thousands of dollars. He goes to work in the morning when it is yet dark and returns to his room long after darkness has returned. When he left home he went with strong resolutions of Y. M. C. A. affiliations and of regular attendance at church, but he discovers both of these require time and money, and he has but little of either.

The bay is still there, the parks are still open, the largest ferry boats in the world are making their regular trips across the bay, carrying hundreds of thousands of passengers every day, but his letters no longer allude to these things.

Does he yet write of the attractiveness of a great city, contrasting it with the unattractiveness of his rural home? Are his letters filled with allusions to his "liberal material income," his "agreeable social life" and "the opportunities for intellectual and

æsthetic enjoyment?" No. He writes of home. Not his new home, but his old home. In the midst of one of the world's busiest places his mind is back home, where they love him for what he is; where there are such words in the vocabulary as friend and neighbor; where more than bare subsistence may be had without a "liberal income" and an "agreeable social" evening may be had without sacrificing an opportunity for full meals for a week following; where a young man of industrious habits and clean morals is welcomed to the best of society and where society is based upon a manhood and a womanhood that are representative of thrift, honesty of purpose and clean morals; where social vice is unknown, drunkenness tabooed and virtue and temperance exalted.

By comparison are our lots hard or easy. He is happy because he has a job. There are already many, many thousands in the city out of employment. This city is no exception. Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis are numbering their unemployed by the ten thousands. In the west many thousands are driven from the cities into the open country, but in spite of these conditions the great daily papers whose duty it is to boom the cities speak of the great prosperity, but say nothing of starving thousands, and in consequence thereof each incoming train and ship augments the Army of Unemployed.

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Each letter brings news of business depression and of great suffering among the laboring people. Each letter expresses appreciation of the job he has. It is not good. It hardly pays expenses, but he has a room, and by careful management he has enough to eat.

In this country the Native Sons are the last to be out of employment. Fidelity to duty and efficiency are not sufficient to compete with Native Sons and a letter brings the intelligence that within 30 days he will be out of a job. The labor situation is now such that there is scarcely employment for Native Sons.

He becomes a soldier in the "Army of the Unemployed." He is face to face with a question for which no social settlement worker or economist has a solution. In the midst of millions of wealth men are wanting work. They and their families are starving. The Army of Unemployed who in time of national danger would be the ones who would first respond to a call to arms and who would gladly lay down their lives to protect property which they do not have, and which under present economic conditions they are not likely to have, are begging for work and fighting for bread.

These are not, as many would have you believe, men who have wasted their substance in riotous living, but men who have enriched the owners of Big Business with their labor and in return received

but sufficient remuneration to enable them to buy food to make it possible to perform more labor.

In this book it is not the purpose to discuss this great question which becomes greater as time grows.

What is in store for the man without capital a generation hence is the gravest question confronting a hundred million people. The economists agree that inefficiency is our greatest economic liability and that we must look to our schools for a greater social efficiency.

The letters of the boy no longer tell of the wonders of the city—beautiful parks, beautiful bays, mountains, city halls, steamships and libraries have little in them that appeals to the man who has no money and who is out of a job.

The letters tell of futile attempts to secure employment, of answering a want ad before daylight to find that a hundred had been there before him. Times grow worse and business becomes duller, and thousands and thousands more are thrown out of employment. Every day there are bread riots; men are starving. But these stories are suppressed. The situation grows worse rather than better. Board and room rent are more than twice as high as back home. There is work back home but none out West. To return to his home and live or stay in the city and starve are his alternatives. He chooses the former. Fortunately he has the money to pay his way, but

what of the thousands of boys who are less fortunate? These must stay to starve, beg or steal.

The economist who is himself on a good salary and has probably never experienced real want will say that it is only the inefficient who are out of employment. This holds good when work is plentiful, but man's capacity for work does not make a position when the labor market is overrun any more than produce will create a market when there is overproduction.

This is a time when men's souls are tried, and it is a time when the unattractiveness of farm life grows less, and "opportunities for liberal material incomes, agreeable social life and intellectual æsthetic enjoyment provided by cities" grow infinitesimally small. These lessons are most valuable if they come early so that escape is possible. Those who learn them and escape are very likely to lead happy, contented lives. They are then in a position to appreciate their homes where want is unknown, to appreciate their neighbors who love them and who care whether their brothers starve, beg or steal.

Many by force of circumstances become criminal, while some more fortunate escape.

The cities are wrong, to a greater or less degree, in permitting such labor conditions as confront them every year, but the rural community is doubly guilty. It takes not the pains to inform itself of real urban

conditions and it is unbelievably negligent concerning its own resources. Legitimate advertising is commendable, and legitimate advertising is a business in which rural communities have never invested.

The cities draw from the rural population in a most natural way.

Every attractive feature of a city is advertised. It is advertised in many ways. The daily papers directly advertise special business, and indirectly through their columns publish the city's greatness. Every article of commerce and trade bears the city stamp; even the cars that carry the merchandise to the rural community herald the name of the city from which they come. Every business of the city that amounts to anything advertises. The commission firms that sell the farmer's pigs and cattle see that the farmer carries in his pocket a memorandum book bearing the firm's name, and that he hangs upon the walls of his home calendars advertising the firm's business. Throughout rural communities emblazoned on billboards are advertised all kinds of merchandise. All sorts of attractions are advertised in the papers, and thus the people read daily and are impressed with the city's greatness. The picture with urban settings of a stylish suit is shown on a handsome man. The same with feminine wearing apparel, always shown with city surroundings, fashionable resorts, hotels, theatres and parks. This is business,

and is right, but it is not right that the rural communities should neglect to do those things which would make known to the world the beauties and advantages of rural life. Homesteads should be kept so as to be attractive to the eye. They should bear the owner's name; the public highways should be kept in good condition. If there must be signboards advertising special brands of clothing, cigars and tobacco for the ruralite, let there be signboards just as large and just as attractive advertising community interests.

At cross-roads and near railroads let there be signs like the following, which tourists may read and remember:

GRUNDY COUNTY

3000 PURE BRED HEREFORDS
2000 GRADE SHORTHORNS
300 MULES
10 BREEDERS OF PLYMOUTH ROCK CHICKENS
12 BREEDERS OF RHODE ISLAND REDS
10 BREEDERS OF POLAND CHINA HOGS

FARM AGENT, TRENTON, MO.

McDONOUGH COUNTY
ILLINOIS TOWNSHIP

60 MILES OF ROCK ROAD
THREE RAILROAD STATIONS
HIGH GRADE FINE STOCK
75 BUSHELS CORN PER ACRE
TAX LEVY TEN MILLS
LAND $75 PER ACRE

FARM AGENT, MACOMB, ILL.

GAGE COUNTY

TWO CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS
ONE RURAL HIGH SCHOOL
ONE FEDERATED CHURCH
FIVE RAILROADS
LAND WORTH $100 PER ACRE AND SELLING

FARM AGENT, BEATRICE, NEB.

MARSHALL COUNTY

FED 300 CARS OF CATTLE LAST YEAR
IT MARKETS $6000 WORTH OF EGGS EVERY YEAR
ITS LAND RAISES
60 BUSHELS OF CORN PER ACRE
300 BUSHELS OF POTATOES PER ACRE
LAND WORTH $90 PER ACRE

COUNTY AGENT, MARYSVILLE, KAN.

JEWELL COUNTY

LAND WORTH $100 PER ACRE
1 ACRE PASTURES THREE COWS
1 ACRE GROWS THREE TONS ALFALFA

COUNTY AGENT, MANKATO, KAN.

Such advertising pays or corporations representing millions of wealth would not practice such advertising. The state has hundreds of townships, each representing several million dollars invested. Why allow these countrysides with all their fertility and wealth and beauty to lie unspoken and at the same time permit them to be littered and defaced with signs promulgating a city's Hog Cholera Serum that is inferior to and costs more than that which their own agricultural college makes, for the support of

which they pay taxes; with signs advertising patent medicines that do not cure; tobacco that we do not want, and lots in the city's "new addition," which is no more a part of a city than the land which we have in corn?

So long as the farmer humbly pursues the policy of "Please, what will you give?" and "Please, what do you ask?" he will be a burden to himself and his sons will be dissatisfied. Coöperation in business and coöperation in educational matters and legitimate advertising will have a tendency to hold those on the farm who are already there and also attract to the farm many who are in absolute ignorance of the one place where life in its greatest fulness may be realized.

CHAPTER XV

The Closing of School

No longer in many states do we have a winter term of school followed by a spring vacation and a summer school. Such was the division of the school years at Constad's Crossing. The winter term closed about the middle of March, and its closing brought back to use the curtain that so successfully hid from view the mysteries of Santa Claus and Christmas.

These exhibitions have been decried by the later-day teachers as a waste of much valuable time. The criticism may be justified in some cases but in the majority of cases it is not. Among fond recollections are the wonders of our school exhibitions. We had our Irish and German dialect declamations and songs; we had dialogues and orations. True, the declamation and oration were not strongly differentiated, but we had them both and everybody liked them, and they created quite a little stir locally just the same as a school exhibition of the present day given under captions of "Senior" and "Junior plays."

It is a most unfortunate condition that has overtaken society as regards its entertainment. The whole social scheme seems to have changed. In many, many ways we have quit home production.

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Everything must be imported, not only imported breakfast foods, imported meats, but imported speakers, imported singers. Knowing and preaching the doctrine of "learning to do by doing," we learn to do by "watching others."

At the present time we are having community welfare meetings throughout the state and speakers are being imported to address these meetings. The people gather, give respectful attention, but that is all they give, and unless these people are stirred to activity nothing is gained by such meetings.

I am writing of a real backward step in educational and social progress. This backward step is being taken in every walk of life.

The sociologist cries for rural leaders and the city and large town are turned over to leaders—every performance is an all-star affair—stars in the school—stars in the church—stars in the college. The individual who is but average looks passively on and learns to do by watching under the guidance and inspiration of an "all-star team." This book is written in the interests of the rural school, and while the rural school has much to strive for there is much included in present day accomplishment that it is well to avoid.

High ideals are beautiful and helpful, but helpful only when people are led into action. The old school exhibition is not considered from a literary

or artistic standpoint par excellence. The games we once did play, for example, town-ball, in which we chose up, giving first choice to the one whose hand came out on top of the bat if it were a round bat, or if flat, to the one who guessed lucky two out of three on wet or dry, were not, scientifically considered, up to present day games. But what of the results?

Who will dare say that the benefits from the games were not as great when all played as to-day when the school is represented by a team in whose interests the entire play activity of the school has been sacrificed? Notwithstanding that the game has reached a high degree of perfection, is the growing child benefited by an activity in which he has no part except to parrot-like scream the " Ricketty, Ricketty Jams " at such designated times as are deemed expedient by the leader? In the old school exhibition everyone had some part and every mother's boy and every mother's girl did best and they were all stars, and all very happy over their success, and their happiness and success lasted till the next school exhibition. Who will dare argue that the benefit was less great than that which comes with our closing events of school to-day when boys and girls make of the occasion a dress affair which few can afford, and import a speaker who does the orating and declaiming while the class sits with folded hands amid palms, ferns and cut flowers listlessly awaiting formal con-

gratulations for something to which they have contributed no more than have the forms in the show windows of a ladies' furnishing store contributed to the business management.

Throughout my writing I have felt in a pleasant frame of mind and have looked upon the present as better than the past, and I have a profound confidence in future educational progress; but there are certain danger places which we should avoid, and which I fear we are not avoiding. We have been, and are, educating part of our people superlatively, and letting the millions go untrained. There is too great a tendency in our common schools and high schools to get away from the individual, and universal education will never come if we do not avoid this tendency.

In a subsequent chapter I have written on the importance of play. So much is being said on that subject that there is a temptation to omit it from those subjects that are considered essential. But when I see leading educators, or rather men in positions that call for leading educators, reducing their schools to mere machines, keeping children for four and five hours without opportunity to relax, much less play, sacrificing childhood in the interests of classification and violating thereby the most sacred laws of child hygiene, I feel it a duty to protest in the interests of the welfare of the future American man and woman. I am far from being optimistic over the

outlook. In the mad desire to excel and to do things exceptionally well, we are sacrificing in every walk of life the masses, and only the individual who does exceptionally well is given recognition or even an opportunity to become exceptional. Any system that loses sight of the individual is bad, regardless of organization effected. Many new plans have much to commend them, but conditions under which they operate must be considered.

The exhibition at the close of the winter term in a measure denoted our year's success. From the beginning of the preparation till the final act the best of feeling prevailed. Everyone deported himself with satisfaction to himself and to his community.

After a two weeks' vacation the summer school opened, and was conspicuous for the absence of all of the larger boys.

The summer school was uneventful and uninteresting. The opportunities for good work were there, but I was unaware of their presence, and had I been aware of them I could not have taken advantage of them.

The middle of June brought it all to a close, and in this I had ample opportunity for exercising managerial ability in establishing a centre for a larger community by bringing together on Indian Creek near Constad's Crossing five schools for a last day picnic.

The idea was new and very popular. Since we were its originators we had another school call a meeting of the teachers to discuss plans. After effecting an organization composed of the five teachers and one assistant from each school district, we were ready for business. Each school became responsible for its part of the program, and each school was to practice a song in which all would join.

A large sawmill located near the picnic grounds loaned us lumber for a platform and for seats, and the teams and men for handling the lumber were many more than needed. Two of the districts had "brass bands" and each volunteered its services and was accepted. The day was ideal and for miles in all directions farm work was suspended and a holiday declared. So great was the enthusiasm that a "stand" was maintained, at which were kept ice cream, lemonade and candy.

Have you become so blasé as not to appreciate the possibilities for a good time with such opportunities as are offered by a country picnic, two brass bands and a stand! Of course, the grounds were in a bend of the creek—that's what bends in creeks are for. It is in these bends that the trees grow the largest and that the grass grows the greenest, and it is just beyond these bends that are found the riffles, and it is in these riffles that the barefoot children love most to be, where the mothers and grandmothers

cast longing glances and wish they were children just for a day. Under the elms on a high bank of Indian Creek was built our platform, and it was no small platform, but was large enough for two brass bands —large enough for all the schools when they sang. It was so large that it seemed limitless to the boys and girls who alone and unaided made pilgrimages across when they spoke their pieces, and spoke them so low as to be unheard even by themselves.

The program was divided into two parts—forenoon and afternoon. The noon hours from twelve to two were not written down as a part of the program, but they were a part, and to be exact I should say the program was divided into three parts. My recollection of the dinner is not distinct. I remember the seats were used for tables and that there was no grouping off, but that several hundred people, old, middle aged and young, occupied places at those tables and that everyone had his dinner, and that lemonade by the bucketful was furnished free with the name of the giver withheld. I could without danger of going far wrong tell just what we had to eat. Of course, there would be light rolls and jelly, new beets and new cucumber pickles and spring chicken and every kind of cake and cherry pie, but what we had is really of small importance, and then it was quite a while ago. The principal points are that we had a good dinner, a big dinner, that every-

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one had all he needed, and that twelve baskets would not have held what was left over. Everyone had a good time, visited with his neighbor and ate with him, and loved him and forgot that his neighbor belonged to the Methodist Church or to no church at all, demonstrating long before the idea of "The School as a Social Centre" was born that the school represents the only really democratic institution under the protection of the Stars and Stripes.

The programs were successes. Nothing said or given from that platform was particularly good, but I have seen many programs since that day that were no better, and paradoxical as it seems, I never saw a poor program given by home talent. We see children every Sunday in Sunday school giving recitations and verses—nothing worth while. Am I forgetting? Yes, they are all worth while. They are ours. They are doing things,—things really worth while. I have seen teachers and parents mortified over the fact that a child forgot his piece. The only care that should be had is the effect that failure may have upon the child—it tried—it faced an audience, and it required courage to do that; it succeeded even though its teeth burned its lips, its throat went dry and the audience went round and round. Give us a greater sympathy for childhood and a greater appreciation of the dangers of an arrested development, and let us put children to doing and keep them doing all through

the period of adolescence, and quit importing all-star companies.

The man and woman who would not rather hear their own children speak and sing are unnatural and should not have children. The man and woman who are not for the home team in preference to the professional players have not felt the joy of being a neighbor. The program for the day closed with a song by the five schools. Of course, we had to open with America, and (not "of course" but we did) close with Onward Christian Soldiers, and we sang it much better than on the opening morning. Although no one was invited to the front there was one who came, uninvited and unannounced, but not unwelcome. He stood in the middle of the platform among the children of the five schools and with the last word he raised his hand to still the crowd that was already quiet. In strong, clear tones he pronounced a benediction upon his neighbors' children, upon the teachers and upon the neighbors themselves, and then "school was out." Another year of opportunities had passed and Big Indian Creek, a concrete representation of living humanity, moved onward by irresistible forces to the place whence it came. Old Indian flows on. I visited her but a short time ago.

It was in the autumn. The trees were yet unmarred by the farmer's axe. The hollyhocks seemed just the same, and the murmuring sounds from the

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springhouse brought back memories—memories sweet, memories sacred. Memories of happy days—of responsibility, hope—memories of dear friends. Father Rose, who died a few years after the time of which this story was written, was survived by Mother Rose by several years. In the cemetery among the hills they both lie buried, and an unpretentious marble gives dates of their births and deaths, and nothing more.

To my mind came the words as I stood by their graves, " They are not dead. When that marble has fallen and the names are unknown to the oldest resident, the Constad Crossing neighborhood will be better because it was once the home of Father and Mother Rose."

Mr. Denman feeds the pigs and works the garden, helps Kansas with her children and her chickens and her cows, and complains of high taxes.

Mollie is the mother of several boys and girls, and her boys are all teachers and their mother never tires of telling them of her ideal teacher.

To Mr. Constad the twenty-five years have brought their changes. He no longer rides horseback over his farm, but drives a touring car of high power. He drives it as though life were escaping and must be overtaken. He talks not of the past. None but the old live in the past. Constad will never grow old. When he is gone a man who is but ordinary can't

take his place. A man who is unmerciful, who loves not his neighbor, who loves to do alms before men to be seen of them, who loves to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the street and thinks he is heard for his much speaking, will not do. But his place will be filled. Such men do not live in vain. These men of character are the human guide-posts along life's roadways. They point the way to the travellers who are footsore, weak and discouraged, to those who are hopeful, anxious and ambitious and who at times are tempted to turn from the great White Way to the dark danger routes that lead to disappointment and failure. Yes, his place will be filled—more than filled.

The world grows better, safer, sweeter, and for this growth it owes a great debt to the rural school, the rural church. Who would have the courage or be so forgetful of their great work as to say that they have lived in vain?

What more impressive painting could the artist paint than one of the little one-room schoolhouse, "The Bethel of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries"?

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CHAPTER XVI

A School Responsibility

One moral question far-reaching in its effect upon rural life, harder to solve than a like one affecting city life, is the unsupervised time of the child.

An enemy to the public school remarked that the public school is the social cesspool. "We have in the world families that are depraved, vicious and vulgar. With our compulsory school laws we compel, for the good of society at large, children from such families to be brought into contact with children who are carefully trained, and whose morals are good, who have pure minds filled with wholesome thoughts. We compel the cultured and refined child to associate with the uncultured and impure. Our schools are a moral uplift for the delinquent child, but what about their effect upon the other child? Is it treating the morally clean child right to force upon it an association at its most impressionable age that is certain to work a real injury?"

These are questions of serious importance. In this regard our schools will not be changed. It is right that the child of unfortunate home conditions be given every opportunity for proper development, and that he be adjusted to conditions under which he will eventually live.

In considering his welfare let us not forget the child of the more fortunate home. Let us, in other words, keep all we have and endeavor to get more. The careful mother watches her children's associates and does not hesitate to rescue her children from those known to be evil and vicious. The school, upon receiving these children, becomes " parent in charge " and assumes an obligation to watch over their moral welfare.

This obligation involves many things. First of all, there must be teachers wise in the ways of the world. They must be people of high ideals. If they are not, the children are better off at home. A thousand things must be known by the efficient teacher. He must know boys and girls. He must be able to detect viciousness and must be quick to guard against it. He must be ever on the alert, during school hours and during intermission.

Many teachers never consider the question of morals in arranging the seating of a school. They thoughtlessly permit a bad girl to sit where her influence is the worst possible; permit a boy of the lowest morals to sit where he can corrupt the morals of others and offer insults to girls without detection.

These are matters concerning which no book rules can be given. The teacher must have common sense and a willingness to use it. The teacher cannot handle a large school and sit for hours behind his

desk. He must know what is happening and he must feel that it makes a difference.

Some years ago a mother called upon a member of the school board, asking that her daughter have her seat changed, stating that she then sat just across the aisle from a bad boy who made vulgar and insinuating remarks. The board member told her to consult the teacher. She replied that she had, but that the teacher had refused her request, stating that her daughter was entitled to no special privileges. The board member peremptorily ordered the teacher to place that boy where he could offer no indignities to decent pupils, and if she could not do this, to suspend him at once. The morals of the school must be protected.

During intermission the plays should be supervised. There are many good reasons for this, but the only one considered here is the moral one.

Children going long distances, over lonely roads, need supervision, and the adult person is of unusual experience if he does not know why. There are many reasons, but the reason now considered is a moral one.

Supervised play, and supervision going to and returning from school, is a more difficult matter in rural than in town schools.

To some teachers supervision is distasteful. They place it along with surveillance. They are willing to

"trust" their children, and such teachers who are mixtures of stupidity and credulity, work irreparable injury. This is an age of supervision and strict accounting. As well argue that a cash register is a challenge of one's morals. Carelessness in business methods makes rogues, and carelessness in child management either in the home or the school makes for imperfection. The wise teacher and wise parent will not wilfully disregard the temptations for wrong action that are often placed before children.

These are matters that caused me great uneasiness during my first school. The journey to and from school is one over which the teacher can have but little control. The law recognizes the gravity of this matter and gives the teacher and parent concurrent jurisdiction over the child from the time he leaves home till he returns home, but this does not insure safety from the vicious children.

There are many who are favorably located, where distances are short or where morals are clean, but there are those who have long distances to travel, and who are forced to be with those who are immoral, and it is for them that a care must be exercised.

CHAPTER XVII

MISTAKES

I HAVE said that one mistake I made was attempting to teach. This opinion is strengthened as I measure the results of my work during that first year. As I view my work of that period I am satisfied that few teachers ever did much poorer teaching, notwithstanding our grand finale and my offer of re-employment at the highest salary paid in the rural schools of the county. One consolation I have found in that year's work is that I have been, in later years, better able to detect weaknesses in teaching, for I was guilty of all of them and know their results.

At the beginning of my work in a city school some years ago the following incident occurred. I shall faithfully recite it for the benefit of my readers, believing that many will recognize in it a personal experience.

A father of children in my school called me into his place of business and said: "You are a stranger to me, but I have a trouble and I hope you can help me out of it. It may sound harsh to you to hear me say it, but I have a son, twenty-two years old, who is absolutely worthless. I am a poor man and have five children, all of whom I desire to educate and

make self-supporting. This son of whom I speak has never been a good student. He never learned very well, and the worst of it is, he never tried. Last year I sent him to a business college and last month he came home with his diploma. I got him a position with an old friend of mine in a neighboring town. Yesterday he came home. He came because he was discharged. I tell you, Professor, he is no good. Now what I want you to do, as our superintendent and as a man who is interested in young people and anxious to help them succeed in life, is to see him, talk to him, look him over, gain his confidence, and try to fix him so he can pass the teachers' examination, so that he can teach school. I know where he can get a school if he can procure a certificate."

I met this son, talked with him, and looked him over, but fear I did not gain his confidence. He was evidently not impressed with the seriousness of the teaching business. He undertook it, however, and, although he teaches but one term in a place, he always manages to be self-supporting, but, it is to be feared, at the expense of a childhood that is in no way responsible for the father's five children, the shortcomings of his son, nor for the father's consuming desire to make his children self-supporting.

Such crimes as the foregoing are directly chargeable to the system under which our rural schools oper-

ate. The system not only makes such cases possible, but it makes possible the worst results imaginable for such cases. If such teachers could be supervised they might be tolerated and they might be made of some use and some of their mistakes eliminated, but under the present small district system their opportunity for destructive work is almost unlimited.

The case cited is a double criticism on our schools. The school is responsible for this young man's condition, and a school that makes such misfits will continue to make them so long as it persists in hiring misfits for teachers.

Through a supposed kindness of heart boards hire such teachers; but kindness of heart and saneness of mind are far from being in evidence when such teachers are perpetrated upon a helpless childhood from which the opportunities of youth are withheld.

Such teachers as the one just described are often hired by well-meaning boards, not for the purpose of giving the teachers employment, but because the children in their school are small and not far advanced, and can, therefore, be taught by a teacher who has not made much preparation. These boards are certainly most ignorant concerning the necessary qualifications of a good primary or intermediate grade teacher. How good it makes the superintendent feel to have his board say, "Get us the very

best teachers for the primary department that you can find."

There is one unfailing sign of a poor school, of an inefficient board, and of a superintendent who is either incompetent or without influence with his board, and that is a school where the primary teacher is not the strongest and highest paid teacher in the grades. How many thousands of small district schools are being taught to-day by young teachers without any professional preparation whatever and with a very limited education, just because "the children are small and anyone can teach them."

The first mistake that I shall briefly consider was my method of teaching the primary grades. In consideration of the several methods of teaching beginners to read we are impressed with the merits of the sentence method, the word method, and the phonic method and the alphabet method. The last one was the only method I had heard of, but it was not the only one of which I made use.

First we learned the letters of the alphabet. This in itself is no small task, and if there is a subjective interest in learning the alphabet it is so hidden as to have escaped detection, and the only objective interest that the child can have in it is that of mastery and a possible desire for approbation. It was a hard task for pupils to learn all those twenty-six letters

and by learning them they acquired a real incumbrance.

By way of illustration I mention a few of the words undertaken immediately after the alphabet was learned. It will be remembered that in learning the alphabet we did not learn the several sounds for which a letter stands. In the word a-t, at; d-o-g, dog; we have the short sounds of "a" and "o," and a knowledge of the alphabet was no possible help there. H-o-r-s-e, horse, involves five letters with a natural sound of "r" and the soft "c" or soft "s." Again we are at a loss for argument to defend the necessity for, or the advisability of having at this time the alphabet. In the first reader then in use, on page 5 occurred the word "tomatoes." Some of my pupils who were able to visualize mastered the intricacies of that word, but others were tasked to the limit and then all did not master it. If the word method had been advocated in those days it would have received little consideration, and yet it was the word method which we finally used, although in our ignorance we did not know it. We had them spell "at," "dog," "horse," "tomatoes," etc., and in the end told them what these words were. The power of the letter meant nothing to them whatever and was a real hindrance.

In comparing that blundering practice (it was no method) with some of the modern methods, one

cannot but sympathize with the children of former days, or with children of the present day who are taught by teachers who have not made special preparation for their work. It is not the purpose of this chapter to give in detail any of the methods for teaching, but to give a few of the practices that were and are yet employed by those who attempt to teach those subjects for which they have made no preparation. (So long as school teaching is used as a stepping stone for those who are ambitious, and so long as many who have no ambitions, and those who fail in all other undertakings, and those who are unable to compete with men and women in other walks of life drift into the teaching business, we may expect practices that are positively vicious to the best interests of education. So long as we have the present methods of employing teachers this condition will prevail. So long as we have school boards of three men to employ the teachers for the children of every ten or twelve families, and these boards must be taken from these families, we can expect no great improvement. The system is vicious and with it cheap, inefficient teachers are sure of employment, and education will suffer.)

As stated, the power of the letter was not considered. The pupil was taught the names of the letters without regard to their function, built them

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into meaningless combinations and called these combinations words after being told the words.

A trained primary teacher can easily accomplish more in nine days than I accomplished with my little people in nine months, and I worked hard, even though blunderingly.

Reading is an art, but teaching reading is a science. This is especially true of teaching reading to beginners. It has been said that "the child learns to read by reading." This is but the thought, differently worded, that "we learn to do by doing"; but modern education has added "under the guidance and inspiration of true ideals." There is an educational maxim to which close heed must be given in the presentation of this subject, and that is "to proceed from the known to the related unknown."

The expert primary teachers make use of the sentence, the word, and the phonetic method, but their greatest success lies in the close relation that they maintain between what the child knows and what he is about to be taught. The method I employed was almost without merit. I tried to lead the child from what he did not know to the unrelated unknown, and since I violated all the principles of sound pedagogy it will not be surprising to state that my primary pupils made little progress.

For the second and third and other grades I made use of the word method in the reading. I

knew nothing of the mechanics of reading. I had not learned that pitch, force, quality, expression, etc., can be secured only by making them the outcome of an appreciation of thought and feeling. The matter of a "proper atmosphere" for good reading was not one of the things I had considered. I pointed to work on the board that was to be read one word at a time, a practice which will make poor readers of already good readers.

"Grouping" was unknown to me. If I wanted them to read "The Death of Absalom" or "Little Nell," I read it for them, affecting a mournful tone, and required them to imitate me. This was very poor teaching. They usually read it as well under such preparation as they sang on the opening morning of school. I did not know then that a pupil who knows the words in the selection of "Little Nell" cannot read it poorly if the proper atmosphere exists. In short, my reading exercises were very poor. I did not teach those to read who did not know how to read, and I did not make those who could read better readers.

I have an idea that I did one commendable thing that had a direct bearing upon their reading. I put at the disposal of the school those books that I felt certain they would like. The first book of which I was personally fond was "Robinson Crusoe." That was the first book that I put on the teacher's desk

for the boys. Next to get in beside this book was "Joan of Arc." "Neighbors with Wings and Fins," "Flyers, Creepers and Swimmers," nor any of the Seton Thompson books were published at that time; but Old Mother Hubbard, Mother Goose Rhymes, Little Red Riding Hood, Æsop's Fables, were right up beside Robinson Crusoe—sometimes, but generally none were on my desk, and these six books always went home with the children at night.

I originated one thing which was full of merit—a reading board. I had a board about two feet wide and six feet long upon which I posted newspaper and magazine clippings. We kept a can of paste ever in readiness, and all contributions of interest or merit that were sent in found a place. The merit of the reading board was evidenced very largely by the increased "interest" in reading.

Many have acquired an interest in history through reading historical romance and an interest in theology through Bible stories; in industrial work through manual training, home economics, domestic science and domestic art; and in sanitation, not by the stressing of active attention to the subject as presented in the physiology of twenty-five years ago, but through a recognition of its vital importance as applied to modern day living.

On the reading board was carefully selected material, material suited to the various ages of those

in school. My first care was to put nothing on it that would not be of interest to the child. It was not long before there was a general interest in my selections and the pupils began to feel that my judgment on what to read was good. It goes without dispute that we get the reputation for being sound by those with whom we agree. However, the teacher must not stop here. Here this must be used as an advantage. Stories were good for the reading board. A little humor was not out of place. The teacher who thinks these things are all right is likely to be pronounced all right himself by the children, and when I later began to add a news item to my selection, it, too, was read, and before the winter was half over the older pupils were bringing clippings of the current events, and these clippings multiplied so rapidly that a reading board for current events became one separate and distinct reading board. What a satisfaction was that reading board! Not only was it popular with the people, it was popular with the teacher. It was his. He had invented it. Surely this was a case of a want being the mother of invention. In this community where there was little to read he was given an opportunity to do what to-day would be little appreciated. This board had one great point in its favor, and that was that all it contained had been censored.

My greatest satisfaction was in the change that

I was able to create in Father Rose. He became my best reader. Many evenings after school he would come in and read our clippings from the reading board. My papers came regularly and he read them regularly. One night I saw him reading from a volume of my Macaulay's History of England. I think there were five volumes, and Father Rose read them all. Among my books was Irving's "Knickerbocker's History of New York." Father Rose not only read that book, but he read it aloud to Mother Rose, and I believe he gave me credit for Irving's success as a writer; at least, he gave me the praise for bringing some of the good things into his life. A man can be known by what he reads.

How do I harmonize his attitude toward these books with his former attitude when he said that reading interfered with his religious enjoyment? This is an easy question. Father Rose had a good, clean mind. The reading that he had been so unfortunate as to know much about, excepting his Bible, had nothing to commend itself to him. It was dry and lacking in human interest. Irving's descriptions of those good, hard working, thrifty, honest Dutch people struck responsive chords in this old man's heart that had waited all these years for the sweep of the hand of that master teller of tales.

So often have I found this great principle in education violated, the fundamental principle or law

of teaching, that "knowledge can be taught only by occasioning proper activities in the learner's mind." Learning is the legitimate offspring of interest and interest demands a changing environment.

Mistakes in teaching arithmetic were not as numerous as those that I made in teaching reading, a thing which was largely due to the fact that I had fewer opportunities for making them. My school was large and the more advanced pupils were allowed to work at their problems with less interruption than would have been the case had the school been smaller. Indeed, I have seen schools in very recent years whose great handicap was the time that the teacher had in which she might help her pupils.

One of the weak places in our graded schools is the so-called supervised study periods, during which time the teacher removes all obstacles and, with the obstacles, an opportunity for getting an education.

"To occasion the proper activity in the learner's mind" is the work of an expert. The teacher who turns the study period into one of slavery for herself and of mental passivity for the pupil is committing a radical error.

How few teachers there are who seem to realize that the success of a school depends upon what the pupil does rather than upon what the teacher does. My mind is not clear as to the attitude of the public on this point. In many places I believe the success

of a school is measured by the activity on the part of the teacher rather than upon the mental activities of the pupils.

Many teachers have the reputation of being good teachers because they are considerate of pupils, because they take such pains in making everything plain, clear, etc. Such a recommendation is a doubtful compliment. "Pupils learn to do by doing under the inspiration and guidance of true ideals." At the other extreme is the teacher who does nothing. While possibly less detrimental than the teacher who does it all, verily she has her reward. Her reward is a consciousness of having "let them work it out for themselves," and while she may never know it, such liberality cannot be classed as teaching.

Not everyone that sayeth "Lord, Lord" shall enter the kingdom, and not every pupil who repeats what is said to him is thinking.

With our boasted progress in education I am of the opinion that the present year finds no great increase in the number of independent thinkers. We have a class of educators to-day who hide or attempt to hide their inefficiencies by deriding any effort at sound building. They immediately cry, "Impractical, junk, rubbish." If the problem is sufficiently varied from the one had in class to call for a little independence in thought it is nothing but a catch problem, and, therefore, obviously unfair. Mental

arithmetic, which once held a prominent place in our schools, has been abolished these many years, except in the primary grades, and technical grammar is with us only in name. The young man and young woman of the present are not amenable to discipline, and it shows up in more places than in their attitude toward the authority which is intended for their control.

There has been more or less controversy during the past few years concerning formal discipline, whether or not one subject carries over into another. It is not my purpose to answer that question, but simply to say habit carries over; character and an education that makes character that is purposeless carries over and it carries over very badly. The college will not make a thinker of a student who has never done any thinking before he gets into college, and the lamentable fact about it all is that the schools of the best reputation—those most thoroughly organized—frequently do the least to bring about a better mental attitude.

In visiting a school where the teacher had each alternate period for helping pupils I found a most happy condition. In all the grades of that school the teachers were meeting with the unanimous approval of the pupils. The teachers so far as I was able to observe were hard working, painstaking men and women. They were continually on the go. When one pupil's obstacle had been pulled out of the

way and the track sanded, other demands were answered, more wrecks straightened out and so far as I could see all would get through on schedule time. As I watched and listened I became inspired with the thought that education is after all just getting results, just getting answers. The pupils had only to obey orders. He could not get his problem; teacher looks and sweetly says, "You have multiplied, dear, instead of dividing." The child divided and got the problem. What more could be desired? One pupil asks, "Should it be he and me or him and I?" The teacher, who has a fine knowledge of the English language but no use for "formal grammar," says, "Always he and I, dear"—and another milestone slipped by. With this same teacher I talked. I asked her how much formal grammar was attempted in her school. She frowned and said, "Very little, we don't believe in it." I asked the principal the same question. He said, "Well, we pretend to do a little," but, lowering his voice, he said, "Between you and I, I haven't no use for formal grammar." I heartily agree with any teacher who denounces formal anything if divorced from thought, but we shall never have English students that can use correct English who do not think, any more than we can have mathematics students who are worth while that do not think. Rules that take precedence

over thought are destructive of the best things in education.

Rules intelligently applied are, without question, useful. We cannot do without them. They have their proper place, but that place is not to be used to the exclusion of thought.

Product divided by the multiplier gives multiplicand is a rule, and has its application in the fact that percentage divided by rate gives base, or area of a square divided by length gives width. R^2 times pi equals the area of a circle is a good rule, and the individual who applies the rule will arrive at the correct result as soon as the one who knows the reason lying back of the rule, and for the solution of a problem involving square or cube root the fellow with the rule will be as efficient in the particular solution as the one who has thought out all the principles involved in the processes. The volume of a parallelopiped is easily obtained by application of the rule, simply multiplying the area of a cross section by the altitude or by multiplying together the three dimensions. The rules are all right, but by some teachers the rule is emphasized and thought is little or not at all exercised. The result of such teaching is generally disappointing.

The rule teacher and the rule pupil are not dependable people. They are not the ones whom we would select to work for us under conditions of

various or of irregular presentations, or where the statement of the conditions is presented in an irregular form. It was not in a rural school that I saw young men who were supposed to have had a fairly decent exposure to high school, and to more than freshman college work, go down before a problem that involved no greater mathematical puzzle than what must 2 be multiplied by to make 6. Mind, I do not say that the above problem was propounded to a college student, but the problem involved that principle and no other; the exact problem being "64 is what per cent. of 512" or interpreted, "How many 5.12's in 64?" The same student has never had any trouble with his English. 24 is how many times 6 would not appeal to a high school senior as a real man problem, and yet he is 50 per cent. likely to miss finding out what part ¾ might be of ⅚.

In an eastern state one of the good men teachers, "unusually successful teachers," so-called, worked every problem in any arithmetic that had rules. He would have been thoroughly incensed if anyone had asked him out of curiosity to find the volume of a parallelopiped, or how to find the number of bushels of corn in a crib or tons of hay in a stack; but he told a member of his board who wanted to know where to run a partition in the crib to make one bin holding 100 bushels of seed corn that there was no rule for that kind of work; that one could figure

contents of a crib easily, but he necessarily must have the crib before he can tell exactly what it holds. With him we can have no serious disagreement.

In higher mathematics rules and formulæ are necessary, but rules not based upon laboratory experience have no place in elementary or secondary education.

The case of the young man who could not tell what per cent. 64 is of 512 aptly illustrates the neglect of every teacher who let him ride through on a rule.

There is a sentiment among teachers from the first primary up that exists among piece workers, that "I'll do my own work and no more," and if a teacher finds a pupil lacking in preparation for her subject to disclaim responsibility and wash her hands. But the student gets very little that is really helpful from such disposition of responsibilities.

For the student I want to express a real sympathy. It is not his fault entirely nor largely, but the fault lies in poor teaching; every teacher who ever had that boy in class and did not help him to think has contributed to his condition. I would have it understood that I have not selected a student who is not average in intellect. He is an average and he is the direct result of an educational practice, extending over and into every subject which calls for exactness and thought. The mere repetition of

words has no place in the acquiring of knowledge or adding to the clearness of knowledge.

It is not my desire to criticise our schools and our teachers too harshly, but we must require more independence in thought if we wou'd educate. I have sometimes doubted the efficiency of the ordinary recitation. The pupils who are able to solve certain problems put them on the board or read them from their papers. Those who cannot solve them see how they are solved and at the same time are robbed of another opportunity of helping themselves. I believe the recitation that is given up to pioneering is the most beneficial.

In some states arithmetics have been adopted because of their most excellent rules and of their most excellently solved problems. More virtue has been claimed for the rules than for subject matter. An arithmetic that required thought or practical demonstration soon became the ridicule of the press and competing book companies, and of teachers who couldn't work the problems because of the absence of model problems and workable rules.

The lack of thought is one of the glaring defects in modern education. Some have the opinion that our students are more deficient in relation to numbers than to language, but I feel qualified to say that this is untrue. I have served seventeen years on teachers' examining boards, and I account for the

verdict that certain individuals are just "fine in grammar" but can't learn mathematics by noting that grammar teachers are less exacting than the mathematics teachers. If they were subjected to the same scrutiny and held down to the *right* and to *wrong,* to the fine distinctions of which our language is capable, the verdict would soon go out that "repetition without thought is the mother of stupidity," whether in language, mathematics, or history.

One who claims a working knowledge of our language and professes ignorance of number relations flatly contradicts himself. If the elementary and secondary schools emphasized thought exercises and thought getting instead of form and formality there would be a complete and beneficial revolution in our educational system.

Some educators have insisted upon a set form of analyses, but even that is not always evidence of thought. While I favor having students go into reasons, I do not favor a set analysis for a problem. That also has a tendency to destroy originality, and like the rule may be accompanied by little or no thought.

Years since my first rural school I met with the following condition in a room where the teacher was considered strong in teaching arithmetic. She had recommended a boy for promotion. The boy's work did not meet with the approval of his new teacher.

To verify her charges against him she kept him after school and had me hear him analyze a problem. His former teacher was an "analyzer." Problem: "If 25 sheep cost $75, what will one sheep cost?" Pupil: "If 25 sheep cost $75, one sheep will cost 25 times $75 or $1875."

Teacher: "Now, Albert, do you understand that problem, or are you just repeating words?"

Pupil: "I understand it."

Teacher: "Albert, please write your analysis on the board."

In the meantime his former teacher was sent for and was present when Albert, in his proudest tones, read from the board, "If 25 sheep cost $75, one sheep will cost 25 times $75 or $1875" (and with a *coup de grace* he added), "because 25 sheep are 25 times as many sheep as one sheep."

At once his former teacher pounced upon him with, "Why, Albert, don't you know you'd divide in a problem like that?" Like a game fish that is away with bait, hook, line and rod, Albert bolted the problem by the division route and his teacher smiled complaisantly while remarking, "Albert needs only a suggestion. I never knew a brighter boy than Albert." Former teacher was a great favorite. Albert never had any trouble while in her room. Albert's new teacher suffered by comparison. She couldn't make Albert's work plain for him, and until

Albert is considerably older he will not know that his former teacher, although honest at heart, was a miserable failure.

The English round tables wail, "What's the matter with our high school English?" The superintendents of the state are wailing at the higher institutions and asking, "Why do you not give us good English teachers?" A professor of history within the last year said he sometimes wished high schools did not teach history, for as it was they only hindered the university work. "But," he said, "since anyone can get past in teaching it in high school, university prepared teachers are no longer specializing in history, because it is usually taught by the home girls who usually have to be taken care of."

The mathematics teacher wails louder than all the others, for he is up against the stone wall. He can't get past without the thought, and since he is almost alone in his efforts his burden is a most grievous one. In the grades, high school and college, the mathematics teacher who does his work conscientiously is like the really good man, likely to be very lonesome, unless he be one of those dear, good men who makes it all so clear that there is nothing left for the student to see.

I know the college estimate of the average high school student, and I know the high school principal's estimate of this same average student after he

has been passed through college. It's a shifting of responsibilities from the kindergarten to college and from college to the kindergarten, and still the evil goes on. It is probably true that nowhere along the line has the teacher had a chance to do good work, for all along the route immature minds are confronted with work beyond them. Number relations are attempted too early in life, and the teacher in desperation breaks every rule of pedagogy in extracting herself from a dilemma for which she herself is in nowise responsible. She is not permitted to spend sufficient time on fundamentals, but is compelled to make the pupil work faster than his mind can be developed.

Short principles should be thoroughly demonstrated before allowing short methods or attempting to apply them. Rules should be taught as conclusions rather than as introductions. Many a pupil goes through arithmetic and algebra without knowing why 3 and ¼ equals 13/4, or understanding that a fraction is an indicated division, or that the reduction of a fraction to lower terms is simply dividing both divisor and dividend by the same number.

The work of the mathematics teacher, as I see it, is by its very nature entitled to first place in the educational curricula and to the mathematics teachers must come a deeper conviction that the responsibility resting upon them is a real one—that there

must be a tightening up rather than a loosening up. Into these days of "easy steps to learning" and "an education while you wait" must be written the words of the old master, who was asked how he mixed his paints, "With brains, sir, with brains."

Let every step in mathematics be taken with thought. Reduce form and formality to the minimum, and as for the rule, let it be the sequence or summary of lesson taught.

Estimating my work in geography as to practicability, I place it very low indeed. I have perfectly good reasons for its being so poor. I taught it as it had been taught to me. As a student I had never studied geography as a science nor in its relation to the sciences, nor in its relation to history. To me it had been given as a memory drill, and as a memory drill I gave it to my pupils. I had received a drill on locative geography which was very deficient. I well remember some years later, when in St. Louis, of being surprised to find the Missouri River not flowing into the Mississippi River at that point, and that I was as wholly surprised concerning the location of Chicago as I was of its size and importance. As to San Francisco, it was a revelation in almost every respect. My knowledge of the Mississippi River was rather complete, for which I am indebted to a close early acquaintance by the name of Huckleberry Finn.

Notwithstanding that the Great Lakes and the mighty St. Lawrence River constitute the largest body of fresh water in the world and a waterway of great commercial importance and that the tributary streams of these inland seas are far from being sufficient to compensate for evaporation, I was content with considering them all as so many names on colored paper. Why, from whence, and whither were of no concern, and because of undirected notions, I was surprised when I, a man, discovered in a trip from Buffalo to Montreal that the St. Lawrence River flowed into the Atlantic Ocean instead of the Great Lakes.

The largest cities were learned in order of their population, but with that we stopped. We named the waters bordering upon New England, but why there are good harbors there, and why important, were insignificant as compared with the fact that the capital of Vermont is Montpelier, on the Onion River. The effects of glaciation upon New England, why New England is not adapted to agriculture, what natural conditions and resources led to ship building in Maine, and the introduction of the textile industries in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, were nothing when compared with the importance of naming the tributaries of the Cumberland River.

The mistakes I made were many more than

these herein enumerated, and the one compensating thought that "I did the best that I knew" affords little consolation for the students by whom the opportunities of youth have passed.

My work in history was not so bad. True, I was guilty of stressing quite an array of names and dates, but we did not stop there. I never was particularly fond of it. I liked to read it, but I did not like to outline it and make maps and charts about it. I made the mistake of doing some of this map and chart work, but since it was not connected very closely with the regular work, it did no particular harm.

If a teacher, even though in an irrational way, conducts recitations in history for nine months, and at the end of that time finds his class interested and wanting more, he can hardly be said to have made a dismal failure.

If, on the other hand, the teacher, even though in a most rational way, conducts recitations in history for nine months, charting, outlining, notebooking and mapping the exact location of every wheat shock on the Gettysburg field, the house in which General Bragg was quartered during the battles of Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain, and the exact location of the road through the swamps of Arkansas which the Seminole Indians travelled in 1837, and finds his class uninterested and

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detesting the very name history, he can hardly be said to have made a shining success.

Critics of such teaching condone the offense by saying that such teachers shoot over the heads of their pupils. To a teacher who has not caught the real spirit of a historian, who has never had a historic conception, it is a mystery why after all his majoring he can manage to destroy all interest and enthusiasm, and many times leave the pupil who once had an interest in the subject in a really antagonistic mood. In no subject does the personal equation of the teacher mean more than in history. No student is in school long enough to get much history, but if he be given a liking for the subject he will pursue the study through life. To instill within the learner's mind an interest in the career of nations should be the ambition of every teacher of history. But why elaborate upon history? The principle underlying the successful teaching of history holds good for the successful teaching of all school subjects. To care why and to know why constitute an indissoluble relationship, which the real teacher will never fail to establish.

CHAPTER XVIII

Music, Stories and Play

A few years ago in a very sparsely settled part of a western state I was called to conduct a teachers' institute. One of the first things in which I found the teachers deficient was music. I am not a good singer, but I can sing much better than the person who cannot sing at all. I would not have a meeting of young people if I could not have some singing. I had taken with me several dozen song books and at once started the teachers singing. It was a great pleasure to me to help them because they enjoyed singing and appreciated my help.

One Sunday I was invited twenty miles into the country to visit, and was requested to bring my song books. We sang together some of the old songs. Notwithstanding that the parents were both graduates of an eastern college, neither of them could sing. The mother told me that until the year before they never had had in their school a teacher who sang. This teacher taught the children a part of a song and then quit. To me it was one of the saddest things I had ever heard about a school. A place where children assembled, day after day, and month after month, and no singing!

A school without music is not a fit place for

children, and a teacher who cannot conduct singing is not a fit person to have charge of a school. It is not absolutely necessary for a teacher to be able to sing. She can teach singing if she will. A teacher of my acquaintance was the most successful teacher of music in a school of fourteen teachers, and all the teachers but this one could sing. She directed the singing; she kept the time and she kept the singers together; she was successful although she herself never sang.

Two of the really commendable things which I had in my first school were singing and story telling.

For the help of young teachers, and old teachers who are in earnest, I will tell how I managed to have singing. I could sing the old songs that I had learned in church, but that was all. Twice a month I went home, and there learned new pieces. Then I taught them to my school. We learned many good songs, and many that were not so very good, but they were songs that the pupils liked.

Among the latter were, "The Spider and the Fly," "A Geography Song," "Little May," and "Robinson Crusoe." I can hear those children, little and big, singing that last song right now.

"When I was a lad, I had cause to be sad,
A very good friend I did lose;
O, I warrant you, Dan,
You have heard of this man,
His name, it was Robinson Crusoe.

Chorus:

Oh, poor Robinson Crusoe,
Poor old Robinson Crusoe,
He went off to the sea
And between you and me
Old Neptune wrecked Robinson Crusoe."

In order to get children to sing there must be a proper atmosphere. Children nor adults sing well when they are not in a good frame of mind. But one good thing about music is that unless conditions are too bad it will create its own atmosphere. The teacher who sends his school home in a bad humor has made a mistake, one that will work personal injury to the teacher. The teacher who can have his school sing one verse of some good song just before dismissal is making no mistake in having it do so. The teacher who "permits" singing and occupies his time grading papers or studying his lessons while his pupils sing has too crude a notion of the proprieties of a leader to entitle him to any consideration. To see the children of a school who in a former year had been blessed with an inspirational teacher who gave them high ideals, presided over (presided is not the right word) by a teacher who would "let them sing" while he did some school work, makes an impression that time will not efface.

Music is one of the most important subjects that can be used in preparation for leisure moments.

It is the duty of parents and teachers to give children encouragement and help in learning to play some kind of musical instrument and in learning to use the voice. There are probably no public benefactors so meanly used by the public as musicians; and yet the whole world loves music. No celebration is complete without it. When the band begins to play everyone from grandparents to babes in arms begins to take on new life. Those who have been gloomy and sad rejoice.

In our churches music is featured whenever possible. We are all proud of our pianist or organist, of our bass and soprano and tenor. No service is complete without them. We remember the Brandenburgs, Helekers, Rhodes, Spradlings and Browns who once were the leading male singers of our town. They sang for our christenings and for our funerals, and one dear old lady who had her teeth extracted invited them in to sing so that she would not mind the pain. They sang when the minister was leaving and when the governor visited us. When they did not sing there was nothing going on. Right now I could tell you what they sang at the fall festival fifteen years ago, although I do not remember who the speaker of the day was, nor what he said, nor who introduced the speaker, nor who made the slide for life.

The band, with its Clifts, Weises, Stowells,

Warners and Bonifaces, put our town on the map. They were the best musicians in the state, and a town that does not have the "best" has not been discovered. They played for everything and were borrowed by all the neighboring towns. Everybody loved them and their music. They loved them almost as much as they did our male singers. Not only did we love our musicians, but we were proud of them, and were always glad to have them sing or play when we were anxious to favorably impress visitors.

They were *our* singers and *our* band, and the pianist was *our* pianist, and although we did not mention it, "it was all so inexpensive. It did not cost us anything." We could show them our beautiful streets, park, expensive churches and our thousand automobiles, municipal waterworks, white way, but these all possessed the ever-hidden sting, "It all costs, though."

All the music to which I have referred never cost the taxpayers a cent. Indeed, not one lesson on piano, organ or other musical instrument was paid for by the public. These voices were all trained at private expense and on stolen time. The young lady doing high school work and taking piano lessons in order that she might the more efficiently serve her school and her church never had her work lightened in the school on account of this sacrifice, nor

was her accomplishment along this line accredited toward her graduation nor did it entitle her to be valedictorian of her class. In her commencement preparation she played for the many rehearsals. They could not have done without her. But the young man who could not forget and who never gave the school anything that could be classified as "service," who never did anything in church but sit and remember, and who was a useless member of society ever after, stood before our pianist, our orchestra, and our band and the taxpayers making his first and last contribution to a public that professed to believe in a socially efficient citizen.

I anticipate no criticism of this expression of music and musicians. The public seems to believe all this, but school boards who object to paying for keeping in repair organs purchased for the schools by private subscription still live. Such boards are not all found among those who are formally declared uncultured and unrefined.

The student of rural education or urban education is well aware that the attention given to cultural subjects in our schools is yet almost negligible. In the majority of schools music and art and physical culture are unworthy of the name.

It requires more than fine buildings and several hundred children to make a school. To give a school of 2000 children one music teacher, one art

teacher, one physical director, is to maintain these subjects in the curriculum only.

A school that devotes five hours to the arithmetic of a young girl or boy and one hour to music does not need an educational expert to give it proper classification. The same is true of a school that teaches art in a similar way.

The school that runs on the "six and six" plan and begins at 8 o'clock, runs without intermission till 12.30, calls school again at 1.30, and with the exception of "gym" one period a week gives the children no time for play, is violating the strongest beliefs of our strongest modern educators.

The rural schools in whose interests this is written are, regardless of the generally accepted opinion, less restricted in their plays than any other schools.

Indeed, with all the supervised play, with the city child, play is becoming a lost art, and with this loss comes an economic one that can hardly be estimated.

The rural child gets to play, and only he who has forgotten or never knew thinks otherwise. It is in the rural school, where all interest is not centred in winning teams, that everybody plays.

The games played now are the old ones and many new ones. In a reflective mood I recall some of the

good times we had in Anthony-over, darebase, blackman, townball, old cat, kick the can and soak.

Children like the dangerous; we did not have football, but we had two games that were just as satisfying in their results of broken noses, collar bones and cracked heads. These were shinny and crack-the-whip.

It is with full knowledge of the million dollars invested in the gymnasiums of our state institutions and of the entire absence of investment for play apparatus in our rural schools that I make the assertion that no runner on an indoor track ever ran with greater enthusiasm or with faster palpitating heart than does the driver of a ten-horse team hitched to a good clothes line, as drivers and horses race, unshod, down the public road. And the fun in snowballing, which is not on the tabooed list, is worth remembering.

Supervised play is to be commended, but the supervision must not be so close as to destroy freedom and the initiative. Cities are working hard to provide play and opportunity for play, but it is impossible to do so as successfully as can be done in the schools of moderate size (*i.e.*, schools of 100 to 500 pupils). Such schools can offer most advantageously a curriculum that functions with the business life and the social life of their people. In no other schools can such wholesome environment be

had. In no city school are there such possibilities as are in store for the rural school that is sufficiently large to require a good teaching force—just large enough to properly handle a curriculum that does not abridge the right of any child of utmost freedom in the choice of an education that will function with his chosen life's vocation.

We must educate for leisure moments. Those who receive no such education are unsafe members of society. In substantiation of this it will be but necessary for the reader to look about him, or possibly to look within. How do we spend our time when we are not at work? This need not apply entirely to the youth, but to the adult as well.

Your day's work is over. It has been unsatisfactory. You have done your very utmost to please and have failed to do so. You may have financial troubles. If a young man or young woman you may be downcast because of social disappointment. What is your avenue of escape? Are you prepared to meet this dark hour? Sometimes you may pour your troubles into another's soul and find comfort and sympathy there, but by such relief are you made stronger?

Have you trained yourself to entertain others with stories, with music? Or are you a human parasite, always receiving but never giving? While you are at work you may not do yourself or society much

wrong, but when you are not at work is the time that calls for strong special preparation. Then, if ever, is when you live. You may live in literature, in art, in music, in play, and if you do not, you are a dangerous member of society. The world professes to believe this, but the world does not believe it strongly enough to levy a tax.

There are other avenues of escape from the accumulations that beset us after our day of toil, and thousands there are who seek them. Some seek relief in narcotics and intoxicants, others do equally bad by succumbing to a morbid condition of mind, while those more sane seek the society of others who, like themselves, have made no preparation for leisure hours. In this last case much depends upon what may be the common interest and this depends wholly upon a past experience and preparation.

The man burdened with business, who will quit work a few minutes early to take his daughter, whose life he would direct, and accompany her to gather violets; who is willing and glad to assemble his children and his neighbor's children about him in an orchestra practice, is doing more to stamp out social evils than the man who preaches against social wrongs, but never directs the activities of the young.

One must have lived a lifetime before he knows that the failures in life are not all among those who have not amassed fortunes. How many homes are

known to us that are not homes? How many such places have reared sons and daughters that are menaces to society? Homes with parents who are capable of making money but are absolutely ignorant concerning the importance of training the finer emotions —of training for leisure!

Our thoughts make our character, and in these days of improved methods of farming and of manufacture when many acts are mere automatisms, it becomes most important that the mind be occupied with wholesome, invigorating thought. As the boy feeds the machine or rides the long furrows and rows, character of the strongest or of the weakest sort is forming, which it is, depending upon his trend of thought, *i.e.*, what he thinks when his thoughts are not employed in directing his work.

Many say that story telling is a gift. Story telling, like singing, can be done better by some than by others, but no teacher or parent who loves children will neglect this great work simply because he does not have the gift, and those who will are either indifferent to one of the great necessities of the child or they are ignorant of it.

When quite a small child I heard my father tell my mother something which at the time I felt in my heart was untrue. I had great regard for his word, but this time I doubted him from the very bottom of my heart. He had simply remarked to my mother

that he was glad the day was the Sabbath. Many, many times since have I been glad for the same reason, but in my early childhood it was a day of torture and of unhappiness. In the morning we all went to church. First, Sunday school and then church. During the sermon we all sat in the large family pew and we all sat very quiet. The afternoon was never spent in visiting, hunting strawberries, fishing, or sleeping. The catechisms and the Bible for the older children, and the younger ones were taught by word of mouth. In the latter part of the day we gathered in a family circle and said our catechism and Bible verses. To me, a young child, this was an awful time, but after the tasks were finished we had an hour that to all was a happy one—story telling. It might be out of place here to tell of the hard struggle which my parents had to properly provide for a large family; of their many, many sacrifices, and of the great care and responsibility with which they were burdened in their great undertaking to rear so many children to become good citizens, but after I had finished I would have to say that the stories told me by them did more to bind them to me in love and affection than all else. I know all the stories of the Bible. Mother and father told them. They turned the day of torture into one of pleasure and gladness. Oh, we had other stories than Bible stories, although not on Sabbath eve. My

mother had the "gift." She knew all the old fairy stories, and she knew about Will o' the Wisp, and she knew about Dido, Cleopatra and Joan of Arc. Father knew about Alexander the Great, Oliver Cromwell, Grant and Stonewall Jackson, and we children knew about them too. He told us, and when we think of our happy childhood, nothing has a more prominent place in memory than the happy story hours.

I have read a great deal of history, but my love for history had its start in stories that my father told. As a man I know of the importance of Burgoyne's surrender, but I know it but little better than I knew it as a child, and sometimes my mind needs refreshing on the date, but not on the event. Indelibly is impressed the picture of Gates' army—an aggregation of scarecrows, and of Burgoyne's troops, the flower of the British army. Between two long lines of scarecrows I see the British soldiers in their brilliant uniforms, their guns shining so that they could be seen miles in the distance, lay down their arms. In these stories I got not only lessons in the history of our country, but lessons in patriotism. I learned of the many trials endured by the patriots. As a child I loved America and appreciated the sacrifices that had been made that there might be a government of, for and by the people.

In my first school I was certain to bring in story

telling. Elsewhere I have told you how poorly I taught reading. I have seen history teachers who had "majored" in history in universities and colleges, who could make more outlines and require more map work than any student could possibly master in the allotted time. They were called good history teachers, but the result of their work was that every pupil learned to dislike history. I care not how successful a teacher may be considered, if she fails to leave her pupils with a desire to "know more" she has not succeeded. This may be considered the acid test of good teaching.

Although I taught reading very poorly, I compensated for this shortcoming by my story telling. By story telling I reduced tardiness to zero and kept the attendance almost perfect, and created in my pupils a desire to read for themselves. I gave them a great variety, and much was from the best authors. I found that Hawthorne's stories took well, also Washington Irving's. I have a very vivid recollection of not feeling entirely comfortable in my recital of all parts of The Legend of Sleepy Hollow. My greatest success was in Shakespeare and Longfellow. I began with Hamlet. First I wrote the names of the leading characters on the board, and as I told the story, simply of course, I pointed to the names. I then took up King Lear, and from it I was able to draw a splendid lesson.

When I told the Comedy of Errors there was fun for everyone. In my library is a large volume of the Complete Works of William Shakespeare. The book is well worn, but the " Presented by the Crossing School to Teacher, Christmas, 18—," is still legible.

In Hiawatha and Tales of the Wayside Inn we had such good times that I am sure many will never forget them, and in January of that year we did something that I am not certain was sensible—we dropped the fifth reader and took up Longfellow's poems, and we did it without a dissenting vote.

When I tell you that my best friends are children and that the best friends that I have among men and women are those whose friendship I made while they were young, I will ask you to attribute it largely to the fact that I have won my way into their hearts by pretty stories. No man who loves children need be jealous of their love if he can tell a good story. It makes him one of them and they never forget.

Only a few years ago I made an unofficial visit to a large rural school. The teacher was young, and on account of having company she was nervous, and because I used to get that way when I had company, she had my sympathy.

She was a good teacher, but since she was afraid she was just then doing very poorly.

To put her at ease I tried a formula which

always works in such cases. I asked a few commonplace questions loudly enough to be heard throughout the room. I then inquired about her primary grades. They were frightened at once. They are afraid of men and "men are not fit to be primary teachers." I asked to be allowed to give the primary grades an oral examination. The teacher gave her consent, reluctantly. My first question was, "Who was Golden Locks?"

Second: "Who killed Cock Robin?"

Third: "Who was Cinderella?"

Fourth: "Who was Uncle Remus?"

None of them knew about Uncle Remus, but they all wanted to know. I told the teacher that I would tell the children some of the Uncle Remus stories, but of course I would not want the older pupils to listen. They all heard for the first time stories of Brer Rabbit, Tar Baby, Mr. Dog, Mr. Fox and Mr. Wolf.

Did the little people listen? Did the older ones listen? Yes, they all listened. The teacher listened, and at the close of my twenty minutes' work everyone was happy, and there was no "company" and everyone was ready to work, and I was one of them. The question may arise in the reader's mind, "Does it pay to win the affection of children?" In answer to this I must say yes. The love of children is lasting. The dislikes of children are lasting also.

In the public mind there is a prejudice against teachers. This prejudice is the outgrowth of child impressions; those who have had teachers who saw life from the child's viewpoint will, when they reach adult life, seek rather than shun the companionship of teachers. In substantiation of these statements the reader is asked to recall his own experience, his recollections of a favorite uncle—his recollections of the harsh and unsympathetic uncle. The former may never have risen high in the estimation of his fellowmen—the latter is a bad man, regardless of the public approbation. So much for early impressions—they are for life, and their obliteration is impossible.

It is all important that teachers win the love and respect of children if they would teach them. This is not a new idea, but it is a true one and one so important that no teacher can afford to ignore it. To win child love and respect requires first of all, real sympathy for child life, and second, strict honesty. There is no possibility of one's escaping detection who is lacking in either sympathy or honesty.

CHAPTER XIX

Training for Leisure

The business of farming is of such a nature that it offers more time for self-improvement than do most other occupations. It is generally conceded that the rural school has not made as great progress as the city school, and this is due largely to the fact that less effort has been made to improve rural schools. Rural people have left the betterment of their schools to educators. In this way they have made a vital mistake; for it is a problem that must be worked out not by the educators alone, but also by those most interested, or relief will not be found.

In the city schools great changes have been effected, but how? Comprehensive and practical courses of study have been introduced, not suddenly, but only after decades of agitation. They have come through the very slow processes of evolution, from causes in which the educator can find but small comfort; since little change has come that is not traceable to external influence. Apparently none have been slower to see the demands of the world than the educator.

Great and important changes will come to the rural school, but how great, how important, and how soon, depend almost entirely upon *active and per-*

sistent agitation of rural people. The rural communities are possessed of a provident citizenship and are to-day facing the greatest of the world's opportunities. They are feeding the world, but they are not teaching the world or leading the world. They have, however, potentialities awaiting liberation which will give to the world greater educators and greater leaders. These powers are not long to remain inactive, and already expressions of discontent and unrest are heard from every quarter.

The most encouraging sign of the times is that the need of better schools is being generally recognized by the rural people themselves, as everywhere, on every hand, their cry is going up, "Our schools are inadequate. They turn out students who are unable to cope with the world's problems."

Never before has there been greater demand for schools that prepare the boys and girls for the life which they are to lead, and, generally speaking, preparation means the ability to make a living.

We are witnessing as never before the drift of rural people to the cities; indeed, this movement has become so great as to occasion national alarm, and everywhere the question is being asked, "How can the tide be turned?" "How can the boy and girl who are discontented with rural life be made contented and glad of an opportunity to remain on the farm instead of going to the city?"

Boys and girls who are country bred and who are inclined toward the city will answer, if you ask why they are leaving the farm, that they want more lucrative employment, that they want shorter hours, that they want better social opportunities. If the mothers of these boys would be asked why they encourage this movement toward the city they will reply, "We want all these things for our children. We want better educational advantages, we want for ourselves better homes, we want to be able to live at least as well as the poor of the town."

Generally speaking the interests of the small town are distinctively agricultural. Towns of 2500 and less are not cities in a proper sense of the term, nor can their schools be city schools, and to devote them solely to the interests of city people is as unjust as it is absurd. The schools of the small towns are the logical centres for the first rural graded schools. These places can with properly revised courses of study administer first aid, and when they have been made to function with the activities of the lives of the people whom they are to serve, one great public service will have been rendered. People, whether they live in the rural town or in the open country, are entitled to such schools.

The educational demands of the present should be for the betterment of educational advantages for rural people. Cities have safeguarded their educa-

tional interests, and will continue to do so, and unless there be a general awakening of rural people the superiority of city schools over rural schools will become more marked.

The demands of the times are for a higher education. If our fathers gave us but a high school education they did no more for us than did their fathers for them when they gave them but a common school education, and to do as well by our children as our parents did by us we should give them a college education.

Many a father is heard to say, "I had but a common school education and what was good enough for me is good enough for my son." This is honestly expressed, but it is untrue. The competition of to-day calls for better preparation. Furthermore, we have no more cheap lands in the United States making it possible for one to get an easy start. Those of the present who justify present conditions by the statement, "It's always been so; the schools of *now* were good enough for our parents, were good enough for us and are good enough for our children," do not realize the great social and economic changes that have come to the last two generations. By those who are sufficiently interested to study conditions it is recognized as meaning more, right now, to fill a place in the business world than at any other time in the history of our nation. Competition is

much sharper in this country with its one hundred millions of people than when there were but fifty millions.

Nineteen thirty-five is not far in the future, but if the normal rate of increase continues, a child born to-day will be but graduating from high school when our population will have reached the enormous number of one hundred and eighty millions and by the time he is forty-five years of age he will be one of a population of three hundred and sixty millions.

In the matter of military preparedness there may be good grounds for and against the proposition, but in the matter of preparedness for social efficiency there can be but one opinion. This preparedness for rural people cannot come through antiquated methods.

A few years ago Hell Gate was blown up, admitting many ships of the largest draught. How was this done? Did they apply methods that were in use a century ago? No; methods used so long ago would not have been effective. With modern appliances a little girl was instrumental in blowing to atoms thousands of tons of rock and rendering safe to shipping one of the danger places of the world.

Present conditions are too perilous to contemplate unless such contemplation be made with a view of enabling present and future generations to rise to their responsibility.

This responsibility demands not that we shall cease to educate for the development of intellect and character, for the inculcation of a proper appreciation of the flowers growing by life's wayside, of the birds in our groves, of poets living and dead, of a virtue that leads to honor and happiness, of a deep respect and love for the drawers of water and the hewers of wood; "but that with it all we shall be aware that this development and appreciation are dependent upon a physical environment which is not independent of that homeliest of decrees, 'Man shall live by the sweat of his face.'"

Present conditions make it necessary that our children get an education and that they get it early.

In getting this education it is necessary, or it is best, that it be gotten at home where parents may exercise their guiding influence through the impressionable years. If all the people or even a majority of the people are to give their children a high school education, this education must for financial reasons be had at home. To send a boy to high school where he must remain away from home and pay his board will mean the incurring of an expense of four or five hundred dollars per year. If the school can be had at home there will be a saving of a larger part of this amount of money and besides the boy can give assistance by doing home work and will retain his interest in the home, which is most desirable. Again,

if we have the home high school, it will mean a local control of the school. A local control will mean not only the number and kinds of teachers which we may desire, but it will include the kind of a course of study which shall be pursued.

It will be possible under such control to have a curriculum that will meet local needs and will educate the boys and girls for what is likely to be their life work. If a community maintains a school that stands for little in which the community has a vital interest, it is maintaining a school that will not be very popular and will be of doubtful value.

The main business of a rural community is farming. The principal interest is agricultural, and anything which has for its *main* purpose that which will draw the young man and the young woman away from the interest of that community is bad.

The rural schools should maintain high standards. The rural high schools should maintain accredited relations with the highest educational institutions of the state, and it is possible to have these accredited relations and emphasize that side of education which will mean most to the community which a particular school would serve. It is neither necessary nor desirable that a high school should confine its efforts to preparing for college five out of every hundred and neglect to educate in terms of their business ninety-five out of every hundred. Much thought

is being given by the sociologist as to how physical and occupational environment affect the life of rural people, of farmers' chances for intellectual improvement, on the decadence of rural churches, etc. It is not enough to know that certain conditions exist, it is not enough to know how these conditions are to be eliminated, *enough* will not be until conditions have been alleviated. These conditions must be remedied through the rural schools. The people are demanding relief; they have asked for bread and been given a stone. The great cry of "Why away from the farm?" is a direct result of our educational system. The education offered has been a means to an end, and that end in far too many instances has been the avoidance of work.

Until recent years we have thought that manual labor was degrading. We have taught that education is for social efficiency, but *not* that social efficiency is a capability for making a living. To be educated has meant to be cultured, and culture and work have been most strongly differentiated. But a few years ago a professional man with more than a high school education addressed a class of young men and women who were being graduated from a rural high school. He stressed the great importance of education and after enumerating the many benefits that would go with such an education he reached the climax by saying: "Young ladies and gentlemen,

had I been content to go without more than a high school education I might to-day be following a plow." Such was his notion of education. He believed, and was free to say to a people living in a rural community, that following the plow was degrading. Schools that foster such sentiments are not a benefit but a curse to a community that they would serve.

One of the troubles that we are having with our schools to-day is that boys and girls drop out of school too early. Sixty-five out of every hundred in the schools of Kansas quit school before they are fourteen years old. We say that they take no interest in school work, that they are not interested in education. Some of our best boys and girls seem to lack interest in school work. They are bright and capable and industrious and would eagerly enter into the activity of the school if it were more practical and less negative in its processes, more constructive and less destructive in its aims.

We boast of hundreds of high schools to-day as compared with scores fifty years ago, and yet these high schools, though supported by a tax upon the public, are built upon old line policies, ministering to the needs of the few and neglecting the necessities of the many.

So notorious is this condition that one might cite examples of rural high schools established for a

specific line of instruction adopting the old line policies which they should especially avoid, and neglecting to incorporate those subjects in which a rural people are most in need, ignoring their immediate and personal interests.

A rural high school offering two years of German and three years of Latin and no vocational work is a deservedly unpopular institution.

In many cases pupils completing the work of the eighth grade drop out of school because there is no high school near their homes, but one of the main causes for their leaving school so early, or earlier, is the lack of harmony between the actual needs and natural tendencies and the subjects offered them at this period. Being denied the opportunity for the development of the initiative, the opportunity for an activity that results in originality, the opportunity for doing, they drop out of school unprepared for life's demands.

The revolt of the adolescent's mental attitude toward the ordinary school curriculum is often complete, and according to the views of many prominent educators is most natural. In this period they wish to express themselves through motor activity, but ordinarily they are reduced to a state of mental passivity. At the time when the school should develop the higher activities, adequate nutrition in the

form of appropriate stimuli cannot be had from inappropriate environments and suppression.

In the adolescent period the child longs to do things, to produce and to acquire, and his training up to this time should be such as to prepare him for these activities. Not to offer those things that make him a factor in the business world is to lose the benefits of previous training and insure a future economic loss to the state.

The inability to make a living, to successfully compete with their fellowmen is the cause of 88 per cent. of the crime for which young men are sent to the state reformatory. In the reformatory they are taught some trade and statistics show that 75 per cent. of the inmates make good when given their freedom. Quoting from Davenport's Education for Efficiency, "It is dangerous to attempt to educate a live boy with no reference to the vocational."

Sixty-five per cent. of our people leave school before the age of fourteen. Surveys show that in every community there are many young people out of school with no more than a common school education and frequently with less. The choice of occupation is being left to chance. Many are at this moment simply drifting, preparing for nothing and looking to nothing definite. They are simply hoping and trusting and we can truly say, judging from the past, that many of them are trusting in forlorn hopes.

It is not conceivable how this condition can exist without convincing the adult population of grave responsibilities. The public schools have a responsibility which they must either assume or else share with penal and charitable institutions, for whose growth the derelictions of the public schools is the largest contributing factor.

It has been said that it is impossible for one who has no leisure time to be cultured. It is quite certain that leisure does not necessarily secure culture, but leisure does affect opportunities for culture, and unquestionably the skilful mechanic or workman will have more time for leisure and greater opportunity for culture. Vocational education may be possessed of culture, just as may education in poetry and history, and like these subjects it may be without culture.

There may be those who translate Virgil as readily as they read their mother tongue, who quote from Browning, Shakespeare, Chaucer—who know so much history that they grieve because more has not been written, and who in spite of all these are the embodiments of slovenliness. They may do all these things but never write a word that they do not smear, nor make lines that are not crooked; they may do all these things, but never wear colors that harmonize; or see sunsets that are beautiful, or women that are perfect, or men who are not "diaboli incarnati."

There may be men who travel as master workmen who violate every law of building, whose finishing touches spoil the splendid work of the workmen who preceded them. A beautifully designed building may never reach completion, because of the lack of culture of its workmen—each succeeding workman doing something to mar the other's work—carpenters with no respect for the masons, and masons none for the plasterer, and plasterer none for any man, woman, child, brickwork, stucco, stone or window that comes within reach of his trowel; and the painter for crudity, sloppiness and smear may be greatest among ten thousand. Surely one must be born with certain aptitudes. Thousands are wise and cultured by education, and some are slovens and boobs in spite of their education.

It required Booker T. Washington to discover that it is dangerous to attempt to educate a negro with no reference to the vocational. "It is dangerous to attempt to educate any active boy without reference to the vocational," and detrimental to man's spiritual expectancy to neglect to educate for leisure hours. Those who have an earning capacity are efficient, economically considered, but if they do their work in a shiftless way, whether it be cooking or sewing, plowing or building, teaching or preaching—if they do their work without love for it, or ambition to excel, and only when scourged by neces-

sity, their vocation is pulling them down, is degrading them, reducing them to the level of their kind, the uneducated, unskilled, uncultured.

Culture and refinement are innate just as are the wild flowers of the prairies. These will blossom and give forth fragrance when warmed by the sun and wet by the rains and the dews. An education which opens the mind to the beauties of the universe and creates within the heart a love and a sympathy for every living creature, and especially for the man and the woman who are the producers of wealth, who earn their living by economic methods, is the sun, the rain and the dew by which culture and refinement can be made an integral part of a social efficiency. A life of money and money alone is uneconomic, is destructive to the best that is in man. A practical education—any education that pays—must not be one that can be measured in its entirety by yards, acres, pounds, bushels and dollars.

Surveys of industrial conditions, social and otherwise, teach that we must educate for social efficiency. This means much more than plowing for corn to feed hogs, to feed children, to enable them to plow more corn. It means more than working in shops, offices and stores eight hours a day. It means all these, but it means more—it means that the individuals of the many industrial classes will be socially efficient when they have a trade, a profession or a

business at which they can provide for their own and their families' welfare, and be happy and safe during their leisure hours. If there is an educational aim other than the bread and butter aim it is education for leisure moments, and the boy on the farm needs this education as much as the boy in the factory, office or store. As man comes more and more to know himself and to know his fellows, the more thoroughly is he convinced that if he has not prepared for leisure moments he is likely to be unhappy and unsafe.

The rural church will continue to decay, the rural school continue to be inefficient and rural community centres and social uplift questions remain questions till we have rural schools for rural people, which will mean *fewer schools with many more courses.* The schools must contribute to the making of social efficiency.

One of the great problems confronting the American people at the present time is that of providing good teachers for all the schools. In its declaration of principles the National Education Association says:

"The National Education Association notes with approval that the qualifications demanded of teachers in the public schools are increasing annually, and particularly in many localities special preparations are demanded for teachers. The idea that anyone with

a fair education can teach school is gradually giving way to the correct notion that teachers make special preparation for the vocation of teaching."

We cannot have better schools unless we have better teachers. Fine schoolhouses, good libraries, complicated apparatus are admirable, but unless behind this educational machinery are real teachers there will result no better schools than the present average country school. The more we load ourselves down with appliances, the more plainly it appears that the prime requisite is the trained teacher. Upon his or her personal fitness rests the future of the country.

Our schools are not properly supplied with competent teachers, and especially is this true of the rural school. The rural community needs better school buildings and it needs consolidation of its schools and courses of study functioning with its life, but its direct need is better teachers.

It is asserted upon tolerably good authority that the United States is able to compete with Germany, France, England, Denmark, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, Sweden and Japan in some particulars only because of her greater natural resources, which are rapidly being exhausted. Unless the United States improves her schools, she is doomed to take second rank ere long. All those countries, earlier

than we, recognized that universal education of the right kind is the only road to success.

The countries named above have solved the problem of providing trained teachers for their schools. France, for example, supports with public funds over two hundred training schools for teachers, selects with care young men and women to fill them as students, pays the board, cost of room, books and instruction of these students while taking the course, provides them with schools at good salaries as long as they teach, and when they retire from active service gives them a pension sufficient for their support. Every teacher in the realm is a trained teacher. Teaching is in the fullest sense a profession.

Agriculture is now a recognized part of many state common school courses. Its importance is conceded to the same extent as arithmetic or any of the other common branches. A large number of the teachers serve apprenticeships in our rural schools. The necessity of their having agriculture is at once apparent.

Those who do not have to serve this apprenticeship are called to the villages and smaller town schools where the demands are not widely different from those made by the rural schools. In fact, the inefficiency of the rural schools is driving the rural pupil into the town schools, and until these rural

schools are brought to a higher degree of efficiency parents will continue to send their children to the town schools, even at a considerable cost for transportation. And here lies one of the dangers—this large influx from the country makes it necessary to provide courses of instruction along lines which shall be of most service to the country child if he is not to be educated away from the country life efficiency. Even though few children from the country receive instruction in the city schools, a reason still exists for instruction that will be of much service to the city child.

No one can successfully teach geography, literature or nature study who is not familiar with the principles of agriculture. No one can understand or appreciate the child life interests who understands nothing of child life, and for these reasons teachers should be prepared to teach agriculture in city schools as well as in rural schools.

Experience in teaching in many departments of school work leads to the conviction that no subject requires more sound knowledge of the principles of pedagogy than does the subject of agriculture. Results are not immediate. In the child, objective interest predominates. The child is ever interested in results, and those results must be immediate. The garden planted today is dug up by the impatient child tomorrow, and expectancy is ever on tip-

toe. Hence the child's interest must be maintained until results may be accomplished naturally. A continuity of subject matter must be worked out, and new devices are always necessary to maintain interest, and none but the thoroughly trained in pedagogy can meet these requirements.

Since the rural teacher must teach children of the lower grades as well as those of the upper grades, it is necessary that she be informed on nature study.

Preparation for nature study will require a rather wider education than knowing a few flowers and trees and the names of animals used for pets. Nature study admirers have more than a three-fold proposition unless they bow to the utilitarian as well as the æsthetic. Their ideals must lead further than an acquaintance with immediate environment. It is well, and most commendable, that the child be led to see the beauties of nature, the ever-varying tints of the heavens, the beauties of the wild flowers, and that it hears with appreciation songs of the murmuring brooks and of the carolling birds, and to observe how Arachna spins and spins and is doomed to keep on spinning; but is this work so built into the course that it can and will be of service later in the child's school work? If so, nature study will live and prosper in the lower grades of the rural schools and should be correlated with every study

possible, forming a valuable preparation for the study of agriculture in the upper grades.

Is it too much to say that nature study that prepares not children for real life by enabling them to gain an understanding and mastery of the physical conditions of life and the varied utilities of life is of little worth? Is it asking too much to ask that nature study work develop self-reliance, respect for labor and teach that only by one's self action can one hope to be of service? It is too much to ask that a work so beautiful in itself, so filled with good and so essential to child development should be so constructed as to be a beautiful and solid foundation from which may rise an edifice not only of structural beauty, but an edifice that will contribute to the future welfare of American citizenship?

Nature study offers a rich practical field, and through nature, sympathy and observation children will have a foundation for science and scientific agriculture. Accurate knowledge of nature, however simple it may be, is essential.

Nature study is based on truth, not imagination, not sentimentality. Nature study develops mind, soul and body. It lays the foundation for the greatest of all industries, an industry absolutely essential to national prosperity, an industry in which every child as producer or consumer is an economic factor.

Theorizing on what should be will amount to but

little unless it causes an awakening of those most concerned. Rural people must work out their own problems.

The rural people have made great progress and have made it under adverse conditions. These conditions are peculiar to rural life, and many of the attendant hardships are the unavoidable results of these conditions.

It is absolutely necessary that an agricultural district be less densely populated than are manufacturing and commercial districts. The fact that rural districts are sparsely inhabited throws responsibility upon few instead of many. Tax is paid by the few, and the territory served is so great that city standards for public improvements are prohibitive for rural improvements.

It is beyond reason to expect that rural roads shall equal city streets, or that the country roadsides shall be as well kept where one man is responsible for one hundred and sixty rods, as is the parking along a city street where one man usually has the care of less than sixty feet. It is unnecessary and undesirable that city standards should prevail in rural places, and this applies to rural schools, rural churches and rural society as well as to rural roads.

The parent has a responsibility for his child's future welfare, and nowhere so much as in rural

places does this responsibility extend to the neighbor's child as well.

The sparsely settled condition of rural communities makes those living in those communities more dependent socially than are those living in towns and cities. Here it is less possible to choose one's associates, and here as nowhere else can one suffer neglect without all being affected. It is therefore imperative that there be a closer organization and a more united effort among rural people than there have been in the past. Owing to adverse conditions it will require a greater effort, a greater expenditure of energy, time and money to make this organization and effort effective than would be required for a similar effectiveness under urban conditions. The foregoing will illustrate fundamental difficulties in nearly all rural problems and suggest that these problems be attacked with a thoughtfulness, earnestness and determination that will inevitably bring solutions of all great world problems.

The activity herein suggested must be purposeful. First of all there must be unmistakable recognition of certain needs, clear and definite objects to be accomplished.

Farming, after all, is a means to an end. The farmer with children has for his purpose the rearing of these children to become intelligent, useful, happy, contented citizens; and neither happiness nor

contentment comes to those who feel that their lots are harder than others have to bear, or their opportunities less favorable.

Better means of transportation, automobiles and good roads are bringing happiness and contentment to many rural homes. Social differences and social distinctions are rapidly disappearing on account of these. Ministers are beginning to recognize that they have no longer two classes of people in their congregations. Everyone recognizes the church as a powerful socializing influence, but in this it will not stand comparison with the school. The school is a territorial institution, and our only really democratic institution, but the school does not measure up to the church as a social institution except in the most progressive and educated communities. Any community can be educated and progressive, provided it wants to be, a simple case of heart and treasure being in the same place. For the accomplishment of these results there must be a passion for real productive achievement along definite lines.

It is no less unkind than untrue to say that rural people do not realize their responsibility to their children; or that they are less sacrificing than are the urban parents. Rural people have made greater sacrifices for their children than have people in other industrial lines, and these sacrifices have been rewarded with incommensurate returns.

CHAPTER XX

Suggested Improvements

The rural schools must be reorganized; they must have consolidation so that they can have a larger school unit, so they may employ more teachers and better teachers, so they may be able to keep their teachers for a longer time, and so they may have more comprehensive courses of study, offering those things which do function with the business of the community. The open country and the school of the open country as well as the church are looking to the rural town. And by the rural town is meant a town of 2500 or smaller population. Our rural towns must furnish the basis or the nucleus for the first consolidated schools. These towns already have schools of such proportion as to afford splendid opportunity for their own students and for those of the open country. It has been argued by some that the rural school should not be connected with the rural town school because the interests of these two peoples are so widely different, but the interests of these two peoples are not widely different and the small town problem is not going to be benefited by the establishment of consolidated schools. In fact, the establishment of consolidated schools in the open country is likely to increase the number of small

towns. Following the consolidation of our schools will come in some places the building of a rural church, the building of a parsonage and a house for the teacher, which will be followed by some other small buildings such as a blacksmith shop, and a store, and postoffice—another small town. Again, as the means of transportation improve, society resolves itself into larger units. The schools adjacent to towns will be the first to consolidate. These larger schools may be properly classified as consolidated in that they will be graded and conveniently located and in that pupils from outside districts will be transported at public expense. True, consolidation will be slower in establishing itself in distinctively rural places, but the time is not very far distant when even these places will favor the larger schools. In these larger schools, as has been stated, the curriculum must be made to function with the life of the community and the school term must be adjusted and modified to meet the requirements of the community.

The greatest obstacles in the way of better schools are the systems of management and taxation. The schools of the several states are being operated under three distinct systems—the district, the township and the county. In addition there are several mixed systems in which the management is divided

between the district and the township, the district and county, or the township and county.

The district unit, such as in Kansas, is the most common unit of organization for the country as a whole. It is the complete basis for rural elementary school management in seventeen states and in four others in part. It is also the larger factor in seven others that have semi-county systems, in which the balance of power rests with the districts rather than with the counties.

In Massachusetts when each settlement was separate and distinct from all others there originated the first public schools, which of necessity were as the settlements, separate and distinct from all others. The territory between the districts so established was originally unorganized, but as it became settled it was included in school districts, and the district system remained long after conditions responsible for it had passed away.

The district system met conditions that probably could not have been met so successfully by any other known system, but the conditions making it the only feasible one exist now but in few places in the United States, and certainly in but few places in Kansas.

The statement that "any community can be educated and progressive, provided it wants to be," cannot stand without certain qualifications. The community must have a desire for these things suffi-

ciently strong to induce it to secure legislation that will abolish the pernicious system that makes it possible for very good schools and very poor schools to exist in adjacent districts. Under the district system the character of the school often depends upon a board wholly ignorant of what a school should be, and even when the board is composed of men of high ideals it is powerless because of insufficient funds, properly to maintain a good school. These are conditions that always have and always will exist under the district plan.

The judgment of most observers is that the district plan is neither economical nor efficient, and the tendency in all the states is toward a larger unit.

It is generally recognized that the public good is best conserved when the body affected acts as a whole. This is most aptly illustrated by state-wide prohibition and local option. There are within the state, communities that would license the saloon but for the prohibition placed on it by the state, and well meaning temperance people would be powerless to prevent it. There are many school districts that have the fewest number of months of school possible and hire the cheapest teachers obtainable, regardless of the wishes of an intelligent, ambitious minority.

Education, like temperance, is more than a local interest. The locality in which one is raised is not certain to be his permanent abode, and therefore his

education must be for the preparation that will enable him to meet other than local conditions.

The district system has permitted the forming of too many small schools and these schools do not yield readily to consolidation because of the fear of many individuals that in the larger unit they will lose prestige. Because of this jealousy and the desire to retain leadership, inferior schools are maintained at great educational loss to the child and at an uneconomic expenditure of money.

The district system deprives the rural boy and girl of the opportunity for higher education unless this education is gotten away from home. The citizens of the state have a right to expect that the school funds be expended in the most economical way. With the district system there can be some good schools, but under it there can never be a good system of schools. Consolidation of the small districts would equalize school advantages, and, as before stated, will make possible a more economical administration of the schools.

There is a general agreement among school authorities that there should be a larger school unit of school administration. Some favor the township as a unit, others the county.

Whether consolidation shall take the form of several large schools in each county or shall be the township system or a county system is a question

for intelligent and serious consideration. All of these systems are meeting with success and are being quite generally approved even by those who most strongly opposed them. In answer to the following questions, 39 out of 40 clerks of consolidated schools gave favorable answers. The answers given here are typical:

1. Do you transport pupils? Yes.
2. What is your longest drive? 4 miles.
3. What do you pay the driver? $25 to $35.
4. How early do wagons start? 7.30 to 7.45.
5. How far do pupils walk to meet the wagons? ½ to ¾ mile.
6. Do you have trouble with or objection to transportation? No.
7. What is the longest walk that any pupil has? 1½ to 2 miles.
8. Has consolidation increased your taxes? Yes.
9. How much? 10 per cent. to 25 per cent.
10. Has consolidation been successful? Yes.
11. Would you go back to the old plan? No.
12. How has it helped your school? Increased the enrollment, reduced the tardiness and irregular attendance and has given us high school advantages. We have more work and a better course of study.

The answers to the last two questions, since they

came from a clerk who opposed consolidation, are full of interest.

The proposition to consolidate carries with it usually the proposition to furnish free transportation to those who live beyond a reasonable walking distance from the proposed school. Consolidation can no longer be considered in its experimental stage, as already legislation has opened the way in about half the states for the transportation of pupils at public expense.

Since consolidation is one of the most important contemplated changes affecting public schools, it is advisable that all those interested in rural schools consider it in the most open-minded way.

(1) That we have always had the little one-room school is not in itself a justification for its continuance.

(2) The fact that it is a radical change is not conclusive proof that it is an undesirable change.

(3) Because it is within walking distance from every part of a certain farming district to a poor one-room school the abandonment of this school for a larger and more efficient school that is within a reasonable riding distance should not result in decreased real estate values. Improved means of travel and better roads are bringing the larger towns nearer to the farms, and they are bringing the larger schools nearer to the rural communities. Fewer

towns, better towns—fewer schools, better schools.

(4) The fact that a larger and better school costs more than a small poor school is not enough to warrant the decision that the former is the less desirable.

(5) While it is alleged that children may be compelled to travel too far in cold and stormy weather, and obliged to walk to meet the team in wet weather, and ride the remainder of the distance in wet clothing, and that children thus conveyed are brought in too close contact with vicious children, and that the driver is frequently an improper person, it must be remembered that these are objections to be done away with by school officers whose powers can be sufficient to overcome and prevent most of these causes of complaint.

In making a business venture it is fully as proper to estimate the gains and the probability of gains as it is to estimate the losses and the probability of losses.

(*a*) If rural schools are poorly graded, and it is almost impossible properly to classify the pupils, and these defects can be remedied through consolidation, two very good reasons may be offered for consolidation: Better grading and classification will permit both teacher and pupils to work more effectively; more time can be given to recitation and greater opportunity for much needed correlation.

(*b*) If such cultural subjects as nature study, drawing and music, and vocational subjects such as manual training, mechanical drawing, agriculture, domestic science and domestic art, are, while very valuable subjects, an impossibility in the one-room rural school, but entirely possible in a consolidated school, two additional reasons may be given for consolidation.

(*c*) If nine months is a better length of school term than seven months, the consolidated school is better, because it is the more likely to give the nine months' term.

(*d*) If it is true, as charged, that rural teachers are young, immature, untrained and inefficient, and that the ablest of these find better positions in the town schools; and if it is true, as teachers themselves testify, that pupils in the small rural schools do not feel the inspiration of the highly competitive life, then the consolidated school is better because it insures better teachers, and more contented teachers, and the retention of teachers, and the consolidated school offers the stimuli of large classes, creating enthusiasm and intellectual rivalry and a confidence which comes only from contact with numbers.

(*e*) If, as is claimed by those who have tried consolidation, the consolidated school results in more regular attendance, affords a broader companionship and culture and quickens the public interest, is there

not abundant evidence that the consolidated schools can fill a real need in country life?

Will a larger school unit provide permanent educational and intellectual centres? If so, will such centres determine the locations of permanent social and economic centres? As stated in a former paragraph, relief for rural schools will come only through the activity of rural people. It is practically safe to predict that the school is to become a school for the people. Up till recent years the public has been slow to act in matters pertaining to education, but now the nation has awakened, and like it as we may, it is demanding an education that will function with the life that is to be lived in a practical world. It is demanding an education that has utility, an education that will work.

The idea that mental development and culture must be divorced from the material world, avoiding everything possessed of utility, everything that is practical, everything that might function with the world's business, has been the educational creed of many an educator; and the only justification, apology or alibi that can be pleaded is that he has led a life wholly in accord with his adherence to doctrines of the consecrated past, believing with a child's faith that it is unpardonable sacrilege to change that "which they of old time have set." Human nature is probably not changing very much and while no

one is advocating an education with a dollar for a central core, the world is demanding that there be an economy of time, that the school shall mean more in the future than in the past, that the school shall prepare the youth for the life that he is to lead, and life is to mean making a living as well as living.

In the township system the schools are under the supervision of a board elected by the qualified electors of the township. The schools are maintained by a tax levied on the entire township. In many states operating under this system all incorporated towns and cities are set apart as separate districts.

Township schools in Indiana are under the management of the trustee, elected for four years. He employs teachers, establishes schools, provides buildings and equipment and regulates the school work. This plan as operated in Indiana is open to some of the same criticism as is the district plan. Any plan that places its schools in the hands of one official without requiring definite qualifications of this official is far from being ideal. It is possible under the Indiana plan for the trustee to be a man of low educational ideals and no educational ideas. He is elected by popular vote and is, as is frequently alleged, elected for his business integrity rather than for his knowledge of educational matters.

In the New England states the township system is under the management of a board called the

"Town School Committee." The Town School Committee has jurisdiction over the rural, town, village and city schools of the township, managing all as a unit. District boundaries have been preserved for facilitating classifications, but they are boundaries fixed by the will of the committee and changed whenever expedient. Schools may be closed by the committee and pupils transported to other schools. The committee makes all contracts, hires and pays teachers and maintains graded schools and a central high school.

The main difference between the Indiana system and the New England system is that the former does not have managerial jurisdiction of the incorporated towns. Throughout the north central states where the township unit is in operation incorporated towns are under separate control.

Separate control for incorporated towns is as unjust as the district plan, in that it prevents the equal distribution of taxes. In certain townships working under this plan, a city of 40,000 or more may be found in one township, and the territory under township control is but a rim around the city —a straggling territory and of comparatively small tax value. The advantages of the Indiana system over the district system are those due to a larger unit of management. While it is superior to the district system it is open to the criticism that it is not

economical nor effective to separate supervision from management. The New England plan has probably given better satisfaction, as everywhere the results have been pronounced good.

Under the township system the schools are managed as a unit, educational advantages and taxes are equalized, better teachers are secured, more sanitary conditions are maintained, courses of study enriched, consolidation promoted, and the supervision —while not perfect—is far superior to that of the district system.

In the effort to secure a larger school unit some have been inclined to offer the state as the unit. It would seem that the state as a unit is open to certain criticism that cannot be offered on the county as a unit.

A state department of education is too far removed from the fields of activity to do sufficiently effective work in either a managerial or supervisory sense (this statement applies specifically to rural schools.) As advisory officials they have and will continue to render a valuable service, and in Kansas it is doing a great work in directing legislation and in helping solve rural school problems. To its activities more than any other agency is due our rapid growth in rural high schools, and higher standards for certification of teachers, and the strengthening of the state department of education is of vital

concern to the educational progress of the state, but for efficient, economical, consistent and progressive administration of the rural schools the unit lies between the township and the state.

The county system is in operation in Utah, Louisiana and Maryland, and is found in modified forms in several other states.

The common plan is to have the county controlled by a board of five elected by the people. The county superintendent is appointed by this board, as are also the deputy supervisors. Their organization is similar to our city school organizations. The county superintendent's work is analogous to that of the city superintendent's, and the deputies' to that of supervising principals'. Like a city board of education, this board determines the educational policy, manages the schools and abolishes or consolidates school districts when in their judgment it is in the interests of better education, employs and pays teachers, appropriates all funds, determines length of school term, and like the township board, provides equal educational advantages for the pupils throughout the county.

This is considered the most efficient system of school administration and under it greater educational progress is possible than under either the district or township plan.

One of the greatest defects in the rural schools

is the lack of supervision that comes from lack of organization. It is evident that our rural teachers are inefficient—that there is ever the danger of inefficiency in the district board; but waiving these objections and conceding that all rural teachers are efficient, and that every board member is an educational expert, these would not insure an effective organization, because under such a system there is no large directing force such as is required for the intelligent conduct of large business.

Under the county plan the supervising officer at once becomes an administrative officer. The unit is too large for one supervising officer, and so is a city of 200,000 too large, but with assistant supervisors it is of workable proportions.

It is also a better plan for taxation. It gives *all* the county the benefit of *all* the tax on *all* the property of the county. Incidentally it is well to note that this equitable distribution of taxes is the real barrier in the way of the county unit. Favored districts that have been permitted through the present pernicious systems to almost escape taxation because of large corporation interests in their districts are most potent factors in preventing legislation that will bring about a just system of taxation. It is impossible in a brief discussion of this subject to more than cite an instance of the unjust distribution of tax in the state. That it is necessary in one rural

district to levy seventeen mills in order that it can have a seven months' school and unnecessary in another to levy more than two-tenths of a mill to have a nine months' school should leave grounds for believing that those who are so wrongfully discriminated against are bearing a burden which would be borne with justice to all if the proper unit of taxation were adopted, and with a distribution of the burden would come a distribution of opportunity for all children and especially for those who because of a crazy-patch division of the county into small districts by the "Dido" practices of early day politicians have been deprived of as good opportunities as those offered pioneer settlers a century ago.

In 39 states the county is the unit of supervision. The weakness of this supervision is that there is no connection between it and administration. These should be closely united. A supervisory officer without administrative power is helpless.

The farmer boy *beyond* the eighth grade should not be compelled to be in school between April 1 and December 1, or more than four and a half months in the year. The average farmer needs his boys during that period. Under the present system he is deprived of his help from September 1 to the middle of May.

In the spring, when crops are to be planted, the farmer is without help unless he hires it. In the

months of September, October and November, when fall crops are to be planted, feed cut, and corn gathered, he must hire help or allow his business to suffer.

In all accredited high schools at least two courses are maintained, one a college preparatory course and the other a general course. The college preparatory course is the main course—one or two other studies not required of college preparatory students make up the general course. True, the general course has more than two subjects, but the remainder of that course is made up of college preparatory subjects with the same exactions that are required for college preparatory work. For illustration, algebra is a college preparatory subject and a general course subject. It becomes one and the same subject in a particular high school. Accredited relations require it to be pursued nine months one year and four and one-half months another year. This one year begins about September 1 and ends the middle or latter part of May. By this arrangement the boy who is not preparing for college who can be in school but a few months each year, the very boy for whom this course is intended must adjust his business to meet the same conditions met by the boy who is preparing for college. He must enter high school during a busy season if he would take the work at all. He must remain in school during a busy season or he is required to repeat the work the following year.

This is a glaring injustice to the farmer boy and one that should be speedily remedied. As indicated above a course of study should be planned permitting this boy to enter school after the busy season and stop when spring farm work requires his services.

At first it would appear that this cannot be done. It can be done. The short course subjects that are also college credit subjects could be completed in two, three or four years, and the work can be done almost as satisfactorily as is done by students in the college preparatory department. This means, too, that these boys would get an education without being weaned away from the farm. It would also mean that should one of these boys conclude later that he wanted to go to college, he has made some college preparation without sacrificing his business. It might further mean that his going to college would be attended with the intention of one day returning to the farm for his life work. Taking a boy from his business nine months each year between the ages of twelve and seventeen destroys his interest in that business and is one of the factors that determine the away-from-the-farm movement of so many boys.

If the high school would minister to the needs of the rural boy as indicated above it might help thousands where it is now helping but hundreds. It will be argued that such a plan would be very expensive. The present plan that neglects to edu-

cate a boy whose parent is taxed for the support of an institution whose benefit he cannot have without neglecting and injuring his business is very expensive. The rural school should run nine months. The children up to and including the eighth grade should be compelled to attend the nine months. The rural high school should accommodate those who want to do college preparatory work, but a distinct course in such a high school should be the short course, and the utmost vigilance should be exercised that the curriculum be not prostituted to do service to colleges and other higher institutions of learning.

The most wonderful question concerning rural schools is less wonderful than the blundering attempts that are being made to remedy rural school conditions. What rural schools need to-day is legislators who recognize their needs, who recognize the injustice of the present administration of rural schools, and who believe that rural children have certain inalienable rights and have parents who are as self-sacrificing as any class of people on earth.

The sub-freshman departments in the several state educational institutions and denominational schools testify to the shortcomings of the high schools. Men of mature age are making college preparation in those schools because at the high school age they were not able to avail themselves of the accommodations offered by their home high

schools. Many of these men, later realizing the importance of an education, attend these preparatory schools, where they find plenty of associates of their own age. Had these short courses been maintained in their home high schools they might not have quit school until they had finished a part or all of the college preparatory courses at home.

It should be thoroughly understood that the short course is not intended as the course for those who can take a full high school course, but to serve those who without it would be deprived of any high school training. The completion of the course could be equal to only one-half of a four years' course.

The great need of the rural young man to-day is that the state shall take proper recognition of his educational problems. He knows what he needs, and he knows it better than do those who insist on giving him what he does not want. He needs a school that he may attend when he *can* without jeopardizing his interest in his life work.

In educational legislation there is little recognition of the injustice of the present administration of high schools for the benefit of rural pupils. There is considerable agitation about consolidation, but there is little or no effort to use to the advantage of the boy who cannot attend school for nine months each year the high schools already in operation and operated at the expense of the county at large.

Much needless energy is wasted in attempts to " rescue " the rural boy without considering his great economic needs. Rural schools for rural people, and a part of the curriculum of town high schools for rural people, when rural people are taxed for the maintenance of town high schools, would be but simple justice and the benefits incalculable.

One of the troubles of the high school of to-day is over-organization. The curricula are often built with automatic interlocking devices and for their symmetry or architectural beauty, rather than for their utility, and then the interests of the pupil are sacrificed on the *altar of classification.*

The suggested curriculum will require about the same number of teachers as are required under present plans. Students taking the short course will each year complete a definite amount of work, and if at the beginning of any year they conclude to change to the regular college preparatory course, they may do so without loss of time. The short course is designed primarily for those who want and need more school work than they are now getting, but cannot obtain it under existing conditions, and at the same time it is so designed that it will be hurtful to none and helpful to many. By this arrangement high schools will become in fact, " schools for all the people," and a rural uplift will be installed and a real barrier to rural progress removed.

A SUGGESTED CURRICULUM FOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN TOWNS LESS THAN 2500 POPULATION

FIRST YEAR

FALL 3 months	WINTER 4½ months	SPRING 1½ months
German I or Latin I	German I or Latin I	German I or Latin I
English I	English I*	English I
Bookkeeping	Farm Accounts*	Bookkeeping
	Algebra*	
Ancient History	Ancient History	Ancient History
Physical Geography		Physical Geography
Elementary Science		Elementary Science
	Mechanical Drawing*	
	Manual Training*	
	Cooking*	
	Sewing*	
	Agriculture*	
Music	Music*	Music

SECOND YEAR

German II or Latin II	German II or Latin II	German II or Latin II
English II	English II*	English II
Algebra I	Algebra I and II	Algebra II
	Algebra to Quadratics*	
M. and M. History	M. and M. History	M. and M. History
	Botany*	Botany
Mechanical Drawing	Mechanical Drawing*	Mechanical Drawing
Manual Training	Manual Training*	Manual Training
Cooking	Cooking*	Cooking
Sewing	Sewing	Sewing
Agriculture	Agriculture*	Agriculture
Music	Music*	Music

*Classes designed for both short course and regular students.

THIRD YEAR

Fall 3 months	Winter 4½ months	Spring 1½ months
German III or Latin III	German III or Latin III	German III or Latin III
English III	English III*	English III
Commercial Arithmetic		Commercial Arithmetic
Plane Geometry	Plane Geometry	Plane Geometry
	Plane Geometry*	
	Physiology*	
Botany		
Psychology		Psychology
	Physics I*	Physics
Mechanical Drawing	Mechanical Drawing*	Mechanical Drawing
Manual Training	Manual Training*	Manual Training
Cooking	Cooking*	Cooking
Sewing	Sewing*	Sewing
Agriculture	Agriculture*	Agriculture
Music	Music*	Music

FOURTH YEAR

Electives from first, second and third years

	English*	
	Vocational Arithmetic*	
	Solid Geometry	
American History	American History	
	American History*	
	Civics*	
	Normal Training Review	

Methods and Management and Arithmetic

Physics		
	Mechanical Drawing*	
	Manual Training*	
	Cooking*	
	Sewing*	
	Agriculture*	
Music	Music*	Music

In explanation of the curriculum it will be helpful to indicate how the students in the several courses may arrange their work. It is assumed that in a particular high school Latin is the foreign language and that we have three classes of students: College Preparatory, General Course and Short Course, which we will designate respectively A, B and C. The school year is divided into three terms: fall term, three months; winter term, four and one-half months, and spring term, one and one-half months.

STUDENT A

First Year:

Latin, three terms.
Physical Geography, Elementary Science or Bookkeeping, fall term.
Ancient History, three terms.
Algebra I, winter term, and Elementary Science, Physical Geography or Bookkeeping, spring term.
English, three terms.

Second Year:

Latin, three terms.
M. and M. History, three terms.
Botany, winter and spring terms.
Algebra, three terms.
English, three terms.

(It will be observed that students will be required to carry five studies the winter and spring terms in the second year. If the student is taking Normal Training, vocational electives from the first and second years should be substituted for M. and M. History.)

Third Year:

Latin, three terms.

Botany, fall term; Physics, winter and spring terms.

Plane Geometry, three terms.

English, three terms.

(If the student is taking the Normal Training Course, Psychology, fall term, Physiology, winter term, and Psychology, spring term, will be substituted for Latin.)

Fourth Year:

American History, three terms.

Electives from first, second and third years.

Physics, fall term, Civics, winter term, and Solid Geometry Elective.

STUDENT B

Sixteen units are required for graduation, all of which shall be elective excepting two years of English, one year of Mathematics, one year of American History, and one-half year of Civics.

STUDENT C

Eight units* are required for graduation from the Short Course.

First Year, Winter Term:

Algebra.

English Composition.

Two electives from the following group: Farm Accounting, Manual Training and Mechanical Drawing, Agriculture I, Domestic Science I, and Domestic Art I.

Second Year, Winter Term.

Botany.

Algebra to quadratics.

English.

One elective from the following group: Manual Training and Mechanical Drawing II, Agriculture II, Domestic Science II, and Domestic Art II. (Electives may also be taken from the group in first year.)

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*A unit is one subject carried nine months, five forty-five minute recitations per week.

Third Year, Winter Term:

English III.*

Three Electives from the following group: Physiology, Physics, Plane Geometry, Agriculture, Mechanical Drawing and Manual Training, or Home Economics.

Fourth Year, Winter Term:

Civics.
English.
Arithmetic.
American History.
Farm Management or Home Management.
Mechanical Drawing or Manual Training.

In choosing electives from the subjects designated as I, II, or III, I must be considered as a prerequisite of II, and II a prerequisite of III.

Music shall be offered as an elective to all students and they shall receive one-half the credit given for a "solid."

This suggested curriculum for rural high schools will not, as arranged, meet the conditions of all places, nor can a curriculum that is suited to all places be made. It is desirable in so far as is possible or practical to have uniformity, but when uniformity is antagonistic to the interests of a community, uniformity should be sacrificed.

* It will be observed that some classes beginning in the fall, *e.g.*, English, permit students to enter in the winter term. In such a case the work in the fall and spring is principally literature, but during the winter term English composition.

CHAPTER XXI

Our Teacher

The lack of harmony between the child's nature and his needs is largely responsible for the strong desire of so many to leave school early. This also has much to answer for as regards his behavior while in school. Superintendents of reform schools and reformatories have experiences that should bring the blush to those who are responsible for the public school.

Many a boy is taken from his home and his home school because he is incorrigible, and when taken to one of the above industrial institutions at once conforms to the rules and regulations and is pronounced number one in deportment and studies.

The mistake is often the teacher, but more frequently it is the curriculum. The boy of twelve to fourteen is not likely to have an objective interest, especially if such an interest be very remote. In my first experience as a teacher I was far from satisfied with the results. My regard for the pupils was so high that after all these years I think of none of them but with pleasure. My two inflictions of corporal punishment, to which I have alluded in former chapters, are not half of all the corporal pun-

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ishments that I have given in twenty-five years, but in the light of past experience I can see no reason to regret those punishments, although regrets for many things that I did not do are innumerable.

In not accepting the school for the second year, I refused on the grounds that I was unprepared for the work. In this school there was a large primary class, and I had done no more for them in nine months than a good primary teacher could do in nine days. The difference between what I did and what a good teacher could have done was greater than would appear at first sight. What they had been taught was very little, and that little was so imperfectly done that it would be a real impediment to future progress. At the close of the school my beginning class could not read and they could not spell. They knew their letters but they could not use them.

I have seen several good primary teachers and I have seen scores of very poor primary teachers. When I see a poor one I think of my first work in teaching, of those little boys and girls whose mothers dressed them and prepared their dinners for them for nine months, trusting to me "to get them started." One mother, who had more sense than the teacher and the other mothers, became so exasperated at having her son kept on the first ten or twelve pages for six or seven months that she took

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the book and put it on the sewing machine, quilting the first few leaves together so that the teacher could not use those pages any more. She was right. Her provocation was great enough to justify the act. How trying on a parent's patience is a poor teacher!

I loved those children and they loved me, and the affection between us lasted until they were men and women grown, but love is not all that is necessary to insure sound primary work.

Our neighbor's daughter may have a good, sweet disposition, the children may love her and run to meet her; yet, she may not be a good primary teacher. She may be a "great hand" with children and be a complete failure as a primary teacher. In no department of the school has there been greater imposition than in the primary department. In no other department is it so easy to escape detection until after the damage is done. So much work that is not education—that leads nowhere and aims at nothing—that is showy and entertaining, but does not hitch up to anything, passes for "good primary work."

Among our best trained teachers are found the kindergarten and the primary teacher, and there is no other school work that is more important than that done by them.

Average school boards know but little of the selection of a primary teacher. (This remark has no special reference to rural school boards.)

The trained teacher is needed, however, in other places. A child may have had good training in the first and second and third grades and get into incompetent hands and be spoiled in grades five and six. Indeed, grades five and six need experts, but for unexplainable reasons there is less expert teaching in grades five and six than is done either above or below those grades. A pupil that is well taught in grades one, two and three may be spoiled in the upper grades, but a child spoiled in grades one, two or three is a difficult proposition ever afterwards.

My success was not marked in any of the grades, but was simply poorer in some than in others.

For fear the reader may lay too great stress upon training, a thing which I believe is sometimes done, I must make clear my position.

If it is impossible to have a trained teacher who is in sympathy with child life I would favor the untrained teacher who has sympathy. I believe that loving sympathy is the highest qualification of the teacher. While this statement will not always meet with favor it will be quite generally welcomed. There are those who believe sympathy and softheartedness are certain to degenerate into mawkish coquetry, sentimentalism and weak discipline. If ever so, it is due to emotional rather than intelligent application.

To those of us who plead for a discipline of the

good old kind it must be gratifying to know that we have an ancestry in every preceding generation since historical records began who have pleaded for a discipline of the good old days, who have said that the more lenient ideals and methods of school and home discipline are operating to increase disrespect for law. In every generation the conservatives have proclaimed that disaster is certain to come from the "new" practices, and in 1847 the Annals of the American Institute of Instruction contained a complaint on the laxity in the schools of that period, saying: "It is to this new-fashioned laxity of rule that we may impart much of the insubordination and riot, yes, even 'Lynch Law,' which has crept into our schools and families, as well as pervaded like a pestilence over our states."

I believe that love for the teacher is one of the prerequisites of learning, and that it is possible for one who possesses a teacher's qualifications to have this love. So much will be done for the child who has a kind and sympathizing teacher that cannot be done for it by the teacher who is selfish and cruel by nature. The real teacher knows that nothing trifling forms part of a child's life. The whole principle of Froebel's teaching is founded upon perfect love for children, and it is this love that every true teacher must strive to possess. "Our Teacher" should be second only to "Our Mother." Fond are

the recollections that I have of many of my teachers and of the happy schooldays spent with them. But there are other days that I would forget, if in the forgetting I lost not a sympathy for those whose lives fall in unhappy places.

I have sat for days, weeks and months on seats so high that my little short legs didn't reach half way to the floor; I have waded snowdrifts and reached school with frozen feet and ears, and found the smoking stove surrounded by other pupils as miserable as myself. I've seen it all. I have vivid recollections of the woman teacher who kept the little girl for a whole day standing on the floor for an offense so slight that it should have escaped notice. I have seen them all. I feel personally acquainted with all the teachers whose hides were so beautifully tanned by that master dermatist, Charles Dickens; but the King of Beasts for whom no generation since the days of Herod could offer a reasonable excuse, taught our little district school in no earlier a year than 1878. Even then, or yet, there was an insane desire to vote the minimum levy and get teachers who would "skin them alive." In that little summer school, with a dozen or fifteen pupils, this man, unmolested by parents who believed all the old adages and prayed for more, held a reign of terror. His old hickory pointers, scraped with glass and sandpapered to a glossy smoothness, constituted

the major portion of his assets. I can hear his song (why God gave him a voice for singing I cannot tell) "Maine, Augusta on the Kennebec River; Vermont, Montpelier, on the Onion River; Massachusetts, Boston, on the Boston Harbor."

While I would forget, I remember that teacher's geography. I remember his big white-handled knife that he used in pointing to the letters of the alphabet as I stood by his side. I remember, too, how afraid I was that he might shift his heavy boots and get on my bare feet. Bare feet are usually hurtable, and boys' feet in the early springtime are quite tender. Usually there's a sore place, too—the place cut by the broken glass, or the place where the locust thorn went in. I think it was his utter lack of sympathy and my intense fear of him, that caused me on my first day of teaching, when I called my little Leonard and Johnnie up "to say their letters" to put my arms around each one and asked them to do the pointing. It was his frowns and growls that I occasioned when I called "d" "b" that caused me to tell Leonard that he probably never would be able to tell them apart, that I never had quite straightened them out. I knew nothing about development lessons, but because that teacher had not helped me to learn "d" from "b" we went into it. We had comparison and differentiation right there, and we all learned the difference between "d" and "b," and

it "stuck," too. Why boys should ever borrow a knife from a man whom they so thoroughly feared as we did him, I have never been quite able to explain. We did borrow it, however, and there hangs a tale.

I am not a generous man, but I have spent much money for knives. I have made many Christmas presents of knives to little boys, and if I think the little girl doesn't need a doll too badly I get her a knife, too. The first thought I have about a boy after I get enough clothes on him to keep him from freezing is to give him a knife.

As superintendent I have had occasion to check children upon their pilfering. I never made an announcement of the fact, but every boy who stole a knife and admitted to me that he did steal it got from somewhere a knife that he didn't have to steal. Well, we borrowed his knife; technically, I guess we stole it. He was not at the desk when we got it, and we only intended to use it in cutting a willow for a whistle. I hate a willow whistle worse than I hate white-handled knives.

Now, these willows were in the ravine not over thirty rods from the schoolhouse, and when we returned with our willows we were minus the knife. Louie said, "You put it in your pocket." The only thing in that pocket was a hole. Money and other valuables never stay very long in my pockets, but

that's the last time anything ever went out of my pocket by way of a hole.

The absolute terror that beset us when we found that the knife was lost would be difficult for anyone who has not had such a teacher to comprehend. Our first thought was to run away. We did run away. Thus the road downward begins. To make our homecoming timely we waited all afternoon in the woods. I say waited. We did not play. A little boy put his hand just over his solar plexus one day and said, " Mr. ——, when you feel bad about something, it's right here, isn't it?" I said, " Yes, sir, that's just the place." I remember the afternoon in the woods with thievery and truancy to be atoned, and in childish fear I was directly headed for Jacksonville, asylum for the insane, or Joliet, the state penitentiary. The day following we feigned sickness, but that could not be kept up. The third day found us both in school. After a usual amount of lying we received our punishment. The old two-piece stuff—denim waists and pants that button—is not much protection against the onslaughts of a merciless, strong man, and readers who believe in children believe me when I say that when we examined our bare legs in the only privacy offered the children of a free and prosperous people, and saw the blood that streamed from the cuts made by his stick, we were glad it was not so bad after all, and

that maybe we would not have to go to Jacksonville or Joliet either one. Certainly our sins had been atoned!

Hundreds of times my teachers have had complaints from parents, have had insulting or censorious notes. It has always been my policy to say to that teacher, "A soft answer turneth away wrath. Be thankful the child has parents who love him and want to protect him and see that he gets a square deal." It is not our fault that the parent feels as he does. Nor is it the parent's fault. He is simply acting according to his light. He has grown up among conditions that fully warrant his antagonism.

As a teacher you are kind, merciful, self-sacrificing. The parent who is criticising you is basing her opinion upon the old-time school when our children were mistreated, often most cruelly.

I do not mean to moralize, but I must not drop this thought till I have said, "I never conferred with a parent about his child, whether the child were right or wrong, but I made a friend of both parent and child." The natural parent loves his child, and in the Book of Books there is not a truer statement than "love begets love," nor that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

In writing of the rural teacher there is great danger of overlooking the many earnest and capable ones who would make good but for the system under

which they work. When they begin they work unsupervised and unaided. In other business no greater success would be realized if conditions were similar.

The sacrificing, painstaking, hard-working teacher is found nowhere more often than in the little one-room rural school.

Whenever I hear the city teacher complaining of her lot, railing at the street commissioners for the snow on the walks, at the janitors for the dust on her desk and the freezing temperature when the mercury drops below 68 degrees, and at her principal for not disciplining her room, I am reminded of the little women, as well-born and as accustomed to well appointed and luxurious homes as herself, who find their ways to school through rivers of mud and mountains of snow, wondering "who shall roll us away the stone" and find their fires unstarted, rooms undusted and later meet everyone with a cheerful "good morning" and a smile. Charge not all the inefficiency of the rural school to the teacher, but to the system under which she works.

To the rural teacher:

You may be teaching your first school and are probably but twenty years old, maybe less. You are miles from home and from your county superintendent. You have had to make your own programs, and have had to do a thousand things that are baffling good city superintendents. If you get

through this year and show that you are capable and able to run a school alone, next year you may work in a city school, have eight recitations per day instead of twenty-eight, and have a superintendent to plan all your work and stand between you and all trouble. In other words, when it is ascertained that you can get along without any help you will be given it.

You are holding the hardest position in the school system. You are doing more work and getting less pay than teachers in graded schools. Do you appreciate the great responsibilities resting upon you? You may get discouraged sometimes, and it would be a wonder if you did not.

But there is another side. Too much cannot be said of the beautiful silver lining of the many clouds that sometimes hang over the teacher's world. In the teacher's life there is a greater radiance of the beautiful and the good than may be found in any other vocation. Many helpful books have been written dealing with the beauty side, the real love side, of the teacher's life. There is world-wide room for the teacher with good common sense and a loving, sympathetic heart. In support of the above sentiment I give the following little story told by a prominent American citizen, now dead, whose name is purposely omitted.

"In a backwoods settlement in an eastern state,

I began life where good schools were unknown. Our teachers were hired for their muscularity rather than for their educational attainment or for their ability to teach, and usually distinguished themselves for ignorance, general inefficiency and brutality.

"On a February morning our little school was opening for its third time that winter. The two men who had attempted to direct us in the narrow path by the only methods then in vogue had found life in this out-of-the-way place too strenuous and hazardous, and we were for the third time that winter mobilizing our allied forces for defense.

"To our mortification the invasion of our territory was made by a body so inferior in size and so—well! our new teacher was a woman! She did not look very strong, was rather pale, and with boyish foresight we saw our cause for battling had been removed. To oppose such a teacher we must invent a cause and employ different tactics.

"She opened school by a friendly greeting; she alluded not to our past; she made no rules nor made known any plans. She told us that little work would be attempted that day, but that she would try to find out about us and our work, in hopes that on the morrow she as well as we would be prepared.

"She sat down by a pretty little girl, learned her name, where she lived; she passed on and on about the room getting acquainted, making little

assignments—making friends. Soon we saw that there was fun or trouble ahead. She was just about to little 'Red Top' Briggs. 'Red Top' was there—dirt, rags and onions. The new teacher would never sit by him! But she did. She learned his name, she looked through his dirty, torn old book—she learned more than his name—she learned that his father and mother were dead, and that he lived 'nowhere very much.'

"When she arose to leave little 'Red Top' Briggs she smoothed from his unwashed forehead some matted locks and tenderly kissed the face that never before had been lighted with a smile. No one laughed.

"In years to come it was my pleasure to be honored by and to be presented to the governor of one of our leading states. This governor was the little red-headed boy who ate onions for breakfast, washed at the creek, and lived 'nowhere very much!' We discussed matters of state, upon few of which we agreed, but our little teacher, then dead, was the one topic upon which there was no division. Of her we spoke in loving remembrance and upon that occasion we financed the project which resulted in erecting in honor of 'Our Teacher' a monument equaled by none in that old churchyard over the remains of the woman who had given life to two

forsaken, homeless boys—she who had been, but never was, a mother."

It's easy to love the little girl with the pretty curls and ribbons, it's easy to love the pretty little boy with dimples that are angel kissed, the Golden Locks and Little Lord Fauntleroys, who live in the big white houses on the hills and who bring the biggest red apples to put on teacher's desk; but to love the Ruggleses and the Wiggses, the Oliver Twists, and the Smikes, the Betsy Shorts and the Shockeys, children who live "nowhere very much," the teacher must have met face to face with the Teacher who said, "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

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